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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JUNE 1890.

Virginie.

A TALE OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY VAL PRINSEP, ASSOCIATE OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

SOME years before a part of the convent of the Abbaye had been converted into a prison to relieve the prison of the Châtelet which had formerly sufficed for the police of Paris. But the Revolutionary authorities, requiring still further accommodation, had appropriated the whole convent. At present there were nearly fifteen hundred prisoners inclosed within its walls, among whom were many wealthy and important individuals. As in most convents there were very few windows, and those very small, towards the street, the rooms all receiving their light from the interior courtyard. While Virginie was resting and gazing sadly at these high walls, a man in a municipal scarf, who started on recognising her, passed hurriedly on. She, poor thing, was so preoccupied that she did not notice the occurrence, but Jean saw the recognition, and touching her sleeve whispered, 'See, a man who knows madame; perhaps he may assist us.'

Virginie turned; in the man hurrying on as though he feared to meet her Virginie recognised Rousselet. In an instant she recovered her presence of mind and rushed after him, crying, 'Monsieur Rousselet! Monsieur Rousselet!'

Rousselet stopped, he hesitated and then turned to meet her. For the sake of his friend Jacques he could not leave her thus, although he felt the interview could only be one of torture to him. What did the woman there? Was she still so wrapped up in her paramour whom he knew to be in prison hard by? His face darkened when he thought of the fancied wrongs he and Jacques had suffered through this man, and when Virginie reached him his stern features were sterner than usual. He made no step to meet her, although she advanced with outstretched hand, but stood with folded arms.

'Monsieur Rousselet,' she cried eagerly, 'I should have been to you had I known where you lived in Paris.' She paused; he did not take her hand. She felt the blood mount to her face as she stood there, abashed at having her greeting repulsed.

'What would you with me?' asked Rousselet sternly.

'Monsieur,' she faltered, 'I would ask after my father.'

'Your father!' answered Rousselet scornfully. 'What right have you to claim a father?'

'Ah!' cried Virginie, bursting into tears, 'do not you reproach me. I know I acted selfishly, nay, wickedly, in leaving him as I did. I would ask his pardon, I would throw myself on my knees before him and beg him to forgive me. Is he grown so very stern? Why did he not answer my letters?'

'He received no letters. He is in Paris,' answered Rousselet.

'Then I will go to him! Where is he?'

'Come with me this instant,' cried Rousselet.

'I cannot, I must go first to the prison, my duty calls me there——'

'Girl!' cried Rousselet, 'what is this duty that separates you from your father? Is it this man that you still love? Think no more of him but come with me. In the name of your injured father I insist,' he added sternly, and he took her by the arm to drag her away from the hated rival.

But Jean, who had watched the interview to see no harm came to his mistress, now stepped up, and seizing with an iron grip the arm of Rousselet, compelled him to loose his hold of Virginie, crying,

'Madame la Comtesse, shall I kill this man?'

Rousselet glared at his assailant and then at Virginie.

'Madame la Comtesse?' he said ironically.

'It is my husband who is there,' said Virginie softly; 'the Comte de la Beauce for whom I left my father's roof.'

'The Comte de la Beauce, the husband of madame, the best man in all France, whom you in Paris have sworn against and imprisoned,' growled Jean threateningly.

Rousselet's heart beat quick. 'What!' he said, half to himself, 'this aristocrat is no vile seducer then?'

'I forgive,' said Virginie, 'your doubts. When I left my father's house it was in anger, and if Monsieur de la Beauce had so wished I would have been his mistress; but,' she added proudly, 'my husband loved me sufficiently to make me his wife, and so I have been since the day I left Sèvres.'

Rousselet was thunderstruck. 'So,' he thought, 'the blow I would have struck at a miscreant comes on an innocent man and on the woman I loved. The vengeance I believed due from the nation is the pitiful revenge of a jilted lover. I have brought this man here to certain death. To-morrow is the day fixed by Danton for the sacrifice of the prisoners; what ought I to do?' Rousselet had something noble in his disposition. He was one of the many whose imaginations were fired by a grand, though perhaps vague, idea of liberty. He was capable of great things, this little man, in pursuit of this ideal liberty, and inwardly despised himself for having yielded to his hatred in the denouncing of his enemy. His conscience had reproached him for his meanness, and it was this had brought him to wander uneasily round the precincts of the Abbaye where he knew his victim to be lodged. Now, when he saw how wrongly he had judged, and how fatal his denunciation was likely to prove, he was wild at the thoughts that crowded his brain. He stood before Virginie, his pale face working with emotion, while beads of perspiration gathered on his brow. Suddenly he collected his thoughts, 'To the prison,' he cried in a hollow voice, and he seized Virginie's hand and hurried with her towards the gate.

Virginie's permit and Rousselet's scarf of office had an instant effect on the gaoler. He begged them to be seated and started at once to fetch the prisoner.

When the two were alone in the parlour or room where prisoners were permitted to see their friends, Rousselet said:

'Madame, there has been a mistake here. There is no time to lose, monsieur must prepare his defence and I must aid him. It is for that I have ventured to intrude. Believe me, if you love your husband, do not dally long here. It is late in the

afternoon and time presses. I will give you half an hour.' He rose to go; Virginie stretched out her hand.

'Monsieur Rousselet, you are very kind,' she said, gently.

'No, madame,' said Rousselet, 'I have been your bitterest foe. Do not ask what I have done; I have been under a delusion, but from this moment I will do my utmost to liberate your husband.'

'I and my child thank you,' said Virginie. Rousselet winced, but he took the outstretched hand and kissed it, and if his trembled as he raised her fingers to his lips for the first time, it was but a proof of the intense emotion he felt, for Rousselet was not a man who easily showed his feelings.

The grating of a heavy door on its hinges told them that the Comte approached, and Rousselet, whispering 'For half an hour,' hastily left the room. It is not necessary to linger on the meeting of this husband and wife. Such scenes when described are apt to lose their tenderness and to degenerate into mawkish sentiment. It is better to draw the veil and allow the imagination of the reader to fill up, as best he or she can, what the writer may fairly confess he does not feel competent to describe. There were none of those grand sentiments expressed in fine language, no pointed epigrams, or well-turned sentences. Under such circumstances, interjections and broken words are mostly used—nay, sometimes silence expresses more than language itself. And yet these two had much to say, and the half hour allowed by Rousselet would have been all too short had they been busily occupied in saying what it was very necessary for each to know. Rousselet meanwhile was racking his brain to settle the best plan of action, and punctually to the moment entered the room. He found the two sitting hand in hand. He bowed to the Comte. 'Monsieur,' he said gravely, 'I little thought when I last had the honour of seeing you, our next interview would be in such a place.'

'Monsieur,' said La Beauce rising, for Virginie had not yet mentioned her interview with Rousselet, 'I am at a loss to know why you come to see me at all.'

Virginie placed her hand on her husband's arm.

'It was Monsieur Rousselet who brought me here. Etienne, you must hear what he has to say; he has come to get you freed from this terrible place.'

'I ask monsieur's pardon,' said the Comte bowing. 'Seeing the scarf of office, I imagined that Monsieur Rousselet had come

on some unthankful task. My experience of gentlemen so decorated has not been a happy one.'

'Monsieur, it is for me to ask pardon for disturbing you, but, as I have already said to madame, there is not a moment to lose. Has monsieur any papers of importance upon him? Excuse me. It is a matter of life and death to settle these affairs of business.'

The Comte hesitated but Virginie whispered—'You may trust him, Etienne.' He then produced those papers he had brought with him and treasured with the greatest care.

Rousselet took them, and retired to the window, to study their contents, and the two had time to tell each other what they would have been more wise had they told at first.

Rousselet's examination over he returned the papers to the Comte. 'Monsieur,' he said, 'I have every hope your papers may clear you entirely. Guard them with the greatest care. Should you be examined, answer with boldness and confidence. Too often hesitation, nervousness, and above all irritation, are fatal.'

'Pardon me,' said La Beauce, 'why this exhortation? Am I not to be examined before a proper tribunal, accustomed to search and recognise truth and innocence?'

Rousselet looked at Virginie. He dared not tell the fatal secret Jacques had revealed to him, lest he should fill her with terror for the next few hours.

'Monsieur,' said he, 'in these troubled times it is impossible to tell who may be judge, and under circumstances one may have to answer for oneself. I go at once to Monsieur le Maire to see what is to be done, and I commend monsieur to be cautious and remember my advice.'

At this moment the gaoler entered the room and announced that the time allowed for visitors was passed, and that madame must be pleased to depart.

Virginie begged to be allowed to share her husband's cell, but the gaoler grimly remarked that the Abbaye was not an hotel, though it was filled by the highest company, and that the permit of Monsieur le Maire allowed only the usual interview. Rousselet too begged Virginie to leave, while even La Beauce whispered a reminder of their boy. So the poor woman embraced her husband, and was conducted by Rousselet to the door. She heard the heavy gate of the prison clang as it shut on her hopes, and overcome by her emotions fainted in the arms of Rousselet.

The wife of the gaoler happened to be in the office of the

prison, and aided Rousselet in his rather clumsy efforts to restore Virginie to consciousness.

'Ah, Monsieur le Municipal,' she said, 'I am used to such cases; they are common enough in our business.' She proved the truth of her assertion by her handiness, and soon the colour began to return to the pale lips of Virginie. A glass of wine and some bread, pressed on her by the woman, succeeded in restoring her—her exhaustion arising as much from fatigue as from mental collapse. The woman was all the while recounting her experiences.

'They come here,' she said, 'by numbers—some loud and full of remonstrance and some pale and tearful. Ah!' she said, 'the wife of a gaoler has a sad time. MM. the Councillors of the Municipality should remember what a strain it is on the nerves, and allow something beyond the pittance granted to my man. The work he has to do and the danger he runs is nothing to the strain it is to his feelings. Good afternoon,' she said to a handsome and most interesting-looking girl, who entered the office as she spoke. 'Good afternoon, mademoiselle. I hope you have succeeded in your errand.'

'Yes, Madame Bertrand,' said the girl with a sigh, 'I have them here,' and she handed the woman some paper, evidently *assignats*. Madame Bertrand hastily pocketed what were clearly her extortionate fees and continued her complaints. But Rousselet abruptly asked who was the young lady who had been thus introduced into the prison. 'That is Mademoiselle Cazotte, come to nurse her father,' said Madame Bertrand.

'And,' cried Virginie eagerly, 'may I not share the imprisonment of my husband?'

Madame Bertrand looked at her keenly, and was about to speak, probably to name her terms, when Rousselet quickly interrupted again.

'You have not the necessary permit of the Council,' he said. 'On Monday I will try to obtain it for you.' And he glanced sternly at the female cormorant as he remarked: 'These permissions ought to be granted by the authorities; any irregularity will be surely punished.'

Madame Bertrand grew pale and was profuse in her politeness. Rousselet, finding Virginie sufficiently recovered, gave her his arm and led her from the prison. He was in mortal dread lest she should be found there on the fatal 2nd of September.

At the gate of the prison they found Jean, who advanced to

meet them with rather a defiant look at Rousselet. That stern individual was much perplexed what to do next. He ought, no doubt, to go to his friend Jacques, and tell him the welcome news of the return of his daughter. Yet La Beauce's indictment had to be seen to at once. It admitted of no delay. Was not the 2nd of September on the morrow, and it was already late in the afternoon? He was, besides, rather ashamed of his part in the prosecution of this innocent man, and the avowal he should have to make his friend of his mistaken severity.

Walking with Virginie he talked to her of her father. He told her of his eagerness to see her return, and the affection that he had always shown towards her, and he was pleased to see that, in talking on this subject, she for the time forgot the terrible position in which she had left her husband. He promised to bring her father to her the next day in the hope that this new anxiety might induce her to remain at home, during the time he knew it would be dangerous for her to be at the Abbaye. He found a passing coach in which he placed her, and informed her that he would proceed himself to the Hôtel de Ville and try what he could do to procure the release of the Comte. Virginie smiled sadly as she bade him adieu. As the coach rolled away towards the hotel where she was staying in the Rue du Bac, Rousselet looked after it with longing eyes. In his heart this woman was thoroughly reinstated. She was pure and holy to him as she had been in Sèvres, only she seemed even more removed from his sphere, even more like the Madonna of those pictures to which he delighted to compare her in the old time. With a sigh he turned towards the Hôtel de Ville. He would work for her, even to the releasing of her husband. He would try his power to the utmost, but—he would allow no buts—nothing should stop him.

Alas! He found, as he anticipated, the matter not so easy. It was one thing to denounce and procure the imprisonment of an aristocrat, or supposed aristocrat, it was another to prove the innocence of such a man. It was in vain Rousselet told his story. Pétion himself, though disposed to give every help, could do nothing. Men like Billaud Varennes and Collot d'Herbois were by nature sceptic. They looked askance at poor Rousselet. They could not understand his motive. 'A man must sacrifice his personal feelings,' they said. It was a mark of what they called true 'Civism' to denounce such men as Comte de la Beauce; that a man should desire the release of an aristocrat was a sign that he must have been influenced in some illicit way. So when late

in the evening Rousselet left the Hôtel de Ville he had a bitter feeling of his own impotence, and a wild regret at his conduct. He did not yet despair. Surely by some means he might prevent such a miscarriage of justice. He would not be daunted by his want of success, but would try again while there was yet time. So he passed on to see his friend Jacques le Blanc.

Virginie on arriving at her hotel was so overpowered by fatigue that Louison, who was on the watch for her mistress, had, with the help of Jean, to carry her from the coach.

‘Thou wicked man!’ cried the indignant Abigail. ‘Where hast thou been taking thy mistress, and what hast thou done to make her in such a state?’

‘Be silent,’ whispered Jean, and here appeared the difference between these two. Both equally devoted to their mistress, Jean served her with the patient fidelity of a great mastiff, while Louison, who loved her just as much, indulged in all the loud demonstrative affection of a lap-dog.

Virginie, tired though she was, turned at the door of her room to smile at her faithful follower. She, at least, understood his patient taciturnity, and was aware that he valued one look of hers above all the praise of the world.

‘Thou wilt watch?’ she said, as she held out her hand to Jean.

‘Madame! can she ask it?’ he replied.

He knew what she meant, and went straight back to the prison, where he had already made acquaintance with some of those who like him belonged to the people, among whom he could, unobserved, watch over the safety of him he knew she loved.

The active and loquacious Louison meanwhile possessed herself of her mistress. She undressed her and put her to bed. She told her all the while of the little Jacques, and how he had enquired after his *petite mère*, but on the whole had behaved like an angel. He was asleep now, the little angel, having cried himself to rest, thinking of his father and mother. Célimène, too, brought hot soup for her cousin, whose shattered frame wanted nourishment and rest; and, when they were left together, listened to Virginie’s story, while they mixed their tears in sympathy. So these two sought rest in the midst of that Paris which was being prepared for the terrible to-morrow.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SECOND OF SEPTEMBER.

VIRGINIE was so overcome with her exertions and trials of the day before that she found it a hard matter to rouse herself the next morning, and go through the necessary effort of dressing. It was nearly ten o'clock before her toilette was completed, and she entered their little sitting-room. She found little Jacques playing with Célimène in the window. He was just calling his mother's attention to a bright toy Louison had bought him, representing a *sans-culotte* in full, or rather incomplete array, with an enormous red night-cap on his head, when Rousselet entered the room. Virginie advanced eagerly to him holding out her hand.

'What news? Have you the release?' she cried.

Rousselet stammered some excuses. Legal formalities had to be observed, certain unavoidable delays had arisen, but all should be arranged, and in a short time monsieur should regain his freedom. He spoke with evident embarrassment, for he was a bad actor, and would have been quickly obliged to reveal the truth of his doubts, had not a burly figure with a beaming red face appeared behind him, crying 'Virginie, I can wait no longer! Virginie, my child!' It was Jacques le Blanc, whom Virginie in her anxiety for her husband had forgotten. He put Rousselet on one side, and, leaving no time for explanations, seized his daughter in his arms, hugging her and kissing her, amid mingled laughter and sobs.

'Thou didst doubt the affection of thy father'—then he kissed her again—'but I never doubted thee. Ask Rousselet—he knows I loved thee. Why not have confided in me?' cried he, forgetting he had rejected the confidences she had tried to make. 'Ah, pardon me,' he continued, seeing Célimène, 'my emotion is so great. A father may be excused'—and he produced his mighty pocket-handkerchief and blew his nose with terrific energy.

Virginie's heart opened to this rough father, and the tears stood in her eyes, but little Jacques did not understand why this stranger should behave in such a way to his mother, and ran between the father and daughter, pushing his grandfather away with all his strength.

'Thou art a bad man!' he cried; 'if *petit père* were here thou would'st not have treated *petite mère* thus and made her cry.'

Jacques paused in his nose-blowing, and looked down on the child. He then burst into a tremendous guffaw of delight: 'The little Vicomte!' he cried. '*Bon jour, beau monsieur!*' and he bent down and held out his hand to the child.

But Petit Jacques retreated behind his mother.

'Petit Jacques,' said she, 'this is thy grandfather of whom I have told thee. He loved thy mother and thou must love him. Embrace my father.' Still Jacques stood doubtful.

'Petit Jacques!' cried Le Blanc; 'thou didst think of thy father then when thou hadst a little one of thine own?'

'He was christened Etienne Jacques after the two I loved,' said Virginie.

Jacques turned away and blew his nose more violently than ever. It was Virginie now who placed her arms round her father's neck and kissed his honest face.

'My child,' sobbed Jacques, 'thou didst forgive me then?'

'It is thou hast most to forgive,' answered Virginie. 'I should have written to thee at once to tell thee my happiness, but I feared I should anger thee, and bring vexations on him. I did write two months after and again when the boy was born.'

Jacques flushed with anger. 'This — government!' he cried; 'they cannot even deliver the letters committed to their care. A set of imbeciles! What griefs they have caused me! I knew, my child, thou would'st have written. Hast thou not the tender heart of thy mother? I thought of thee unhappy and friendless, and was angered at—. But these letters. What would they have been to me? Art thou sure they were duly sent to the post?'

'I sent them by special messenger—Louison—thou rememberest Louison?'

'Louison still with thee!' cried Jacques. 'The brave girl!'

Here little Jacques, who had felt himself neglected, set up a dismal howl; and straightway father and daughter, forgetting all else, united in their efforts to console him. When they succeeded, and were finally seated with the little lad on his grandfather's knee and Virginie by his side, they found Rousselet had gone. Célimène had also discreetly retired. So the two talked as they had never done since Virginie was quite a child, and Virginie told her father of the happiness of her life at La Beauce and of the trouble that had now come upon them, which she looked upon as a judgment on her for her conduct in leaving her home in anger.

'Speak not of it!' cried Le Blanc, becoming, if possible, of a

brighter red, being conscious of the part he had played in denouncing his son-in-law. 'It was I that was to blame for my violence. It was my love for thee, Virginie, that led to my uneasiness. When I saw thee so beautiful, so much above the position of thy poor father in education and bearing, I was afraid thou would'st be lured from thy home by some good-for-nothing *seigneur*. In my former life, when I served these people, I had seen many good girls so led astray. I knew the temptations to which thy dear mother was exposed'—here he wiped his eyes. 'I never imagined any one of that class would have acted as M. de la Beauce has done.'

'Ah,' said Virginie, 'thou knowest him not! And he is in prison!'

'Trouble not thyself,' answered Le Blanc, waving his hand, 'Rousselet occupies himself with his release. Thou may'st trust him.'

So they passed the time, Jacques finding it no easy task to fix his daughter's attention, till at about two o'clock the guns of the Hôtel de Ville fired three times. Virginie listened and counted the discharges in fear thinking it might be a rising of the people, but Le Blanc chuckled quietly. He, good man, was used to such sounds. 'Thou wilt hear the tocsin sound from the bells, and drummers beat the *générale*. Yet do not fear, such things happen often. And as I came along with Rousselet, we heard that there was news of the taking of Verdun; that probably is the cause of the excitement.' Sure enough before long there was a beating of drums and a sounding of bells. 'Did I not say so?' cried Jacques; 'have no fear.' So they talk on, till Petit Jacques, who was playing in the window with his *sans-culotte* doll, cried out, '*Petite mère*, see many like my doll are coming!' They went to the window and a band of *sans-culottes* armed with guns, pikes, sabres, and all sorts of grotesque weapons passed the windows, shouting, '*À bas les émigrés!*' 'Death to traitors!' 'To the frontiers!' Le Blanc grew white as he saw them going in the direction of the Abbaye, for he remembered the words of Danton. He had been warned by Rousselet to keep the peril of her husband from Virginie, and above all tried to prevent her going to the Abbaye, where her presence could do nothing for her husband and might be a danger to herself. So he set to work by every means in his power to interest her and make her forget for a time the position of her husband. Poor fellow, how hard he worked! Luckily Virginie had no idea of the truth.

Later on there came a letter from Rousselet himself, written from a café near the prison, bidding her be of good cheer, but warning her against trying to reach the Abbaye, as the streets he found were thronged with people excited by the surrender of Verdun, and eager to be led against the enemy. He added, he would keep watch himself at the prison, and that no harm should come to the Comte de la Beauce while he was there.

The very idea of the danger suggested by this letter filled Virginie with alarm, and she would at once have gone to her husband to share his peril, in spite of the warning in Rousselet's letter, had not Le Blanc and Célimène both joined in restraining her, arguing that she would never be able to arrive at her destination, and that her presence was necessary to watch over little Jacques. What alarmed her now more than the letter was the prolonged absence of Jean, who contrary to his habit had never presented himself to report all was well.

Célimène was delighted with Virginie's father, whose quaint way of talking was new to her, and, when the worthy fellow on the momentary absence of Virginie confided to her the alarm he was in as to the safety of De Beauce, she readily assisted him in his endeavours to keep Virginie in the house. So passed the day.

As the evening set in the movement in the streets increased. It taxed all Le Blanc's resources to keep Virginie from taking alarm at the noises and bustle of the passing crowds. In his excitement he kept up a continual stream of talk, now recounting anecdotes of the youth of Virginie, now playing with little Jacques, and babbling his infant talk, or again paying little compliments to Célimène or even Louison. It was in vain he tried to fix the attention of his daughter, who actually at about 8 P.M. was preparing to go to the prison for news, when at last Le Blanc burst into tears, exclaiming, 'Would'st thou leave thy father a second time?' Virginie feeling ashamed of her anxiety laid aside her hat, and strove to console her father, who offered if she would only stay at home to go out himself for news. 'For,' said he, 'there is much more fear for a lady in the streets on such a day than for M. de la Beauce, who is well guarded in prison.' He blushed as he told this falsehood and left the room. He returned shortly with the report that all the commotion was through excitement at the news of the fall of Verdun, and arose from the hasty enrolment of citizens for the general defence. It was true he had gathered these tidings, for the news of the forcing of the prison

did not even reach M. Roland, Minister of the Interior, till the next morning ; and Le Blanc's report was what was currently believed in Paris during the night of the 2nd.

Partially consoled then by this good news, Virginie at last, about midnight, sought her bed, and passed a restless night, a prey to the alarms occasioned by want of news. Le Blanc himself went home weary and sad at heart. Although he had heard nothing he had every cause to fear for the safety of the prisoners. Yet had he faith in Rousselet. And as he walked home he consoled himself with the assurance that his friend would avert any danger that might threaten his son-in-law, and that he himself could do nothing.

Early next morning (September 3), Virginie received a letter from Rousselet begging her to keep at home. He told her that all was going well, but that it was impossible for any well-dressed person to pass through the streets near the prison as they were still crowded with excited people. It was, he said, her husband's wish she should not run any risk. 'I trust, madame, to bring monsieur your husband to you before long, but delays are great, arising partly from the excitement produced by the news from the war, and partly from there being so many prisoners to be tried before it comes to the turn of M. de la Beauce. Depend upon it no sacrifice I can make will be too great to procure the freedom of an innocent man.' So concluded the letter, which was written on paper of a poor kind, and was not altogether clean. It put Virginie into a state of wild terror. Why were the prisoners being tried so rapidly? Why was Etienne obliged to bide his turn? She was preparing to go to the prison in spite of the letter when her father arrived. He was pale and nervous, and when he read the letter, fully confirmed Rousselet as to the crowded state of the streets, and the danger a woman would run in trying to get to the prison. Poor Jacques had heard of the massacres of the day before, and was in truth relieved to hear that the Comte was yet safe. He enlarged on the devotion and tact of his friend, and insisted on his advice being followed implicitly.

'See thou,' he urged, 'Rousselet knows all these men well, and if he says "It is well," be sure thou mayest trust him, for friend Rousselet is not of a sanguine temperament. '*Tiens, beau jeune homme,*' he said with forced gaiety to his grandson, who just then entered the room with Célimène. 'I have something for thee here ; wilt thou kiss me if I give it thee ?'

'*Petite mère* says I'm to call you *Grandpère,*' said the child.

Jacques le Blanc seized him in his arms and kissed him. 'Little

angel, thou little cabbage, thou sweet little mouse!' cried the delighted man, heaping up all the terms of endearment he could think of, 'was there ever a little man so clever and so good?'

As soon as the hugging was finished, and Petit Jacques was on his legs again, he held out his hand for his present.

'Ah, I had forgot it!' cried the elder; 'what an idiot am I! Eh?' Then he pulled from one capacious pocket an assortment of toys and bonbons that quite dazzled the country-bred child.

'Céli,' said the grateful child, 'says you are a dear old man.'

'And who is Céli?'

'Don't you know? She,' said Petit Jacques, pointing to his cousin.

'I thank you, mademoiselle,' said Jacques, bowing to Célimène, who blushed at being betrayed.

Then Jacques turned to his daughter.

'Virginie,' he said, 'dost thou remember this cup?' and he produced from his other pocket a massive silver tankard. 'It was used by the Grand Monarque, mademoiselle,' he continued to Célimène. 'Now we have changed all that. I give it to my grand-child in the place of the one I ought to have presented when he honoured me by taking my name.'

Virginie took the cup from his hand. She remembered it well, as the most precious ornament of the Couronne d'Or. She recollected it from her earliest childhood when it was the only thing in the house she was not allowed to touch. She kissed her father affectionately; she knew he had nothing to give that he valued more than this relic, which had been so highly esteemed by his family.

'Come and kiss thy grandfather again, my son,' she said; 'he has given thee a beautiful present.'

The boy went up to Le Blanc and raised his pretty face to be kissed.

'Céli was right,' he said, 'you are a dear *grandpère*.'

Be sure the emotional Jacques was much overcome.

'My daughter,' he said, 'thy husband shall assuredly come to thee soon.' But Virginie sighed and was silent.

If Le Blanc hoped to divert his daughter's thoughts from her husband's danger that day he was doomed to disappointment. Virginie did her best to be comforted. She tried to listen to the prattle of her child, and the feverish and assumed gaiety of her father; but from the way her eyes filled with tears, and the many times she convulsively seized and embraced her boy, both her father

and Célimène knew that her heart was at the Abbaye. The poor woman glanced constantly at the clock that stood on the mantel-piece. Why was his coming delayed? Louison with the well-intentioned but tactless volubility of her class added to her agony of expectation by exclaiming, 'That good-for-nothing Jean—why comes he not to see his mistress? Ah! he is a *sans-culotte* at heart, and is probably now with his friends, drinking confusion and death to their betters.'

'Abuse not the good Jean, Louison,' said Virginie with assumed calm. 'He is looking after my interests you may be sure.' She had almost forgotten him in her anxiety, but when he was thus recalled to her she could not but attribute his absence to some dread cause.

So passed that day in suspense, and the evening drew in and no sign or news of La Beauce.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WITH LA BEAUCE IN THE 'ABBAVE.'

EARLY on that Sunday morning the news of the fall of Verdun and the approach of the invading Prussians was spread through Paris. The proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, who commanded these Prussians, in which he threatened utterly to destroy the fair city of Paris, and treat its inhabitants as traitors, that is to say, hang them, was already known to all Parisians. What wonder then if Paris trembled, and if, when a levy *en masse* was proclaimed, the citizens gathered together to man the ramparts and rush against the enemy. And who, they asked, were the most pitiless of their foes? The aristocrats who had left the country, the *émigrés* who were with Brunswick, and to whose cause he bade all France rally. And so the alarm guns sounded, the tocsin rang, and drums beat the *générale*! And Danton from the tribune of the Legislative Assembly shouted forth his famous '*Il nous faut de l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace!*'

Then arose a cry, from whence was never proved, that the cruellest enemies were not those who were openly in arms with Brunswick, but those who had lurked behind in the capital itself, to raise an insurrection when all good citizens had gone to the front, and Paris was left without its natural defenders.

'Strike, then,' said some, 'before we go. Let us not have

these traitors to butcher our wives and children during our absence. To the prisons! to the prisons!'

It is not the province of the story-teller to dwell on general history; he must leave that to the graver historian, whose task it is to unravel the causes of historical events, and expose the grand results proceeding from them. The humbler duty of the story-teller is to study history in its minute details, as it affects the characters in his tale, focussing his attention on those simple individuals whose cares and joys it concerns him to describe. Return we therefore to the Comte de la Beauce in his prison at the Abbaye, and let us see and feel what he saw and felt.

On Sunday, September 2, La Beauce found himself imprisoned in the chapel of the Abbaye, where were nineteen others besides himself. It was not reassuring to find he had been given the bed of M. Daugremont, who had been led to execution two days before! His interview with Virginie and his conversation with Rousselet had, however, raised hopes in his mind that he would be speedily liberated. Alas! the hours passed and no news arrived.

Those who were in the chapel had all been longer in prison than he. Their hopes had been so often raised and so often disappointed that, with the fellow-feeling engendered by misfortune, they strove to cheer the new-comer. And he quickly found that, despite their position, these men could laugh and joke and forget their cares. Amongst the others old M. Cazotte, the author of the '*Diable Amoureux*,' was the cause of much laughter through his absurd proposals. But to La Beauce his levity appeared out of place, and he preferred to sit by the bedside of a captain of the Swiss Guard, one Reding, whose arm had been badly broken by a bullet on August 10 at the taking of the Tuileries.

It was noticed by the prisoners that the gaoler who attended on them brought their dinner an hour earlier than usual, and that he had a wild, frightened look. At two o'clock he came to clear away, but would answer no questions, and, contrary to custom, collected and took away with him all the knives which were usually left in the prison, each prisoner placing his with his napkin. He also insisted on the nurse who was attending the poor captain leaving the prison.

At half-past two the cannons were heard giving the alarm, and the tocsin and drums sounded. The chapel, in which they were confined, had windows so high from the floor that it was impossible to get a sight of the outer world from them, but in the

corner there was a kind of turret with narrow loophole windows overlooking the Rue St. Marguerite, into which the prisoners were wont to crowd and watch. From this place three carriages were seen approaching the gate of the prison, surrounded as usual by a wild crowd shouting furiously, 'A la Force! à la Force!' The gates of the prison opened, but before the carriages could enter therein, those inside them were dragged out and murdered. Two only were seen to escape into the prison. The occupants of these carriages were all priests!

Horried by what they had seen, the poor prisoners, their gaiety all gone, huddled together in whispered consultation.

At half-past four they heard loud cries in the street. They rushed back to the turret, and there saw the massacre of the prisoners begin. One by one the poor fellows, who appeared to be all members of the Swiss Guard, came out and were hacked to death by the crowd armed with sabres, hatchets, and pikes, the *égorgeurs*, or executioners, after each death shouting, 'Vive la nation!' In the intervals of the execution the affrighted inmates of the turret heard the people cry, 'Do not let any escape! kill them all, especially those in the chapel!'

Then there came a period of stillness, which was almost more awful to the nerves of the powerless prisoners than the wild shouts of the murderers during the actual time of the massacre.

Of the nineteen in the chapel Cazotte was the first to be summoned. They heard him pass down the staircase amid the cries and yells of many people. They could not tell what was his fate as he did not return.

Reding, the Swiss captain, was next; he was a Swiss and could expect no mercy. A crowd of men, red with blood, rushed into the chapel, accompanied by the gaoler, who was made to point out the bed on which the unfortunate man lay. La Beauce, who had taken the place of the nurse, pressed the poor man's hand and strove to reassure him. Alas! what could he say or do? The wretches seized him.

'Ah, messieurs,' he cried, 'I have suffered enough already. I do not fear death, only for mercy's sake kill me here!'

Some of these men seemed touched with compassion, but the others shouted 'Allons donc!' and immediately he was hoisted on to the back of a man, and carried out screeching with pain. One man, perhaps in very pity, was seen sawing at his throat with a sabre, and by the time Reding reached the tribunal he was dead.

Overcome with emotion at this terrible scene those who were left clasped their hands in despair; some in their agitation embraced and bade their friends farewell, and then sat motionless expecting death, while the cold passionless moon shone softly on the floor of the chapel. It was ten o'clock at night and there was an awful pause.

At midnight men with swords in their hands, preceded by two gaolers carrying torches, entered the prison, and ordered the prisoners to stand each by the foot of his bed. The leader of these men after he had counted them said, 'If one of your number escape you will all be massacred without being heard by Monsieur le Président.'

When they were left alone whispered consultations were held as to what they had seen. Some were anxious to ascertain the best position in which to receive the death awaiting them. It had been noticed that those who tried to defend themselves with their hand, on being sent out to the *tueurs* (killers), underwent additional tortures, the hands being lopped off before the fatal stroke was given. It was therefore decided that it was better to keep the hands behind the back, and so meet death at once.

Towards morning La Beauce was able to snatch a few hours' sleep. He felt it was necessary for him to husband his strength. Had he not thought of Virginie and his son, had he not been cheered by Rousselet's assurances, he might have given way to despair, as did many of those in the chapel with him. He was, however, a man of great nerve and determination, and, having made up his mind to do what he could for himself, he resolutely sought repose to gain strength. He slept till nine o'clock, and when he awoke a sort of calm seemed to have set in, only broken by the groans and cries of the prisoners themselves. On looking out to the street they could see that the men 'who were working for their country' were wearied in spite of their zeal, and needed some repose.

At ten o'clock two priests, who from their place of confinement had access to the tribune above what had been the altar of the chapel, suddenly appeared there. Both were aged men of a venerable appearance. Announcing that all were to die shortly, they invited those in the chapel to receive their blessing. Though many of those present were wont to scoff at the Church and jeer at her servants, after the manner of polite society of the times, human nature asserted itself, and, in the piteous condition in which they found themselves, all without exception fell on their

knees, and, with hands joined, received the proffered blessing. There were none who did not feel the calmer and more full of courage for thus being brought to think of their Maker. Shortly after they heard the two priests led down the stairs to their death.

Their agony was much aggravated by the forgetfulness of their gaoler, who had neglected to supply them with either food or drink for twenty-six hours. When the men engaged in this horrible massacre heard their complaint they expressed the greatest indignation, and would at once have punished the forgetful gaoler with death had not the prisoners themselves saved his life by refusing to name him.

Meanwhile La Beauce was anxiously turning over in his mind what he should say when his turn came, as come it would. He now remembered Rousselet's advice. He evidently knew more than he would say in Virginie's presence, and it was not without intention that he had exhorted him to retain his papers, and speak openly. Filled thus with hope, and feeling confidence in his coolness, he managed to get to the door and converse with the sentry he found posted there. By good luck this man was from his part of France, and La Beauce addressed him in his native *patois*.

The man's heart being evidently softened by hearing his own language spoken, the Comte boldly asked him to get him some wine, of which he felt greatly in want, and the man after a short absence actually brought a bottle. He was admitted by one of the turnkeys, and, bidding him lock the door and remain outside, the sentry handed the bottle to La Beauce, who took so mighty a draught that the soldier stopped him, saying: '*Sacré!* how you drink! I want my share too!' Then taking the bottle, 'To your health!' he cried, and emptied the contents. 'I have but a moment,' he said in a whisper when he recovered his breath. 'Listen to what I say. If you are a priest or a conspirator for M. Veto' (the king), 'you are *flambé*' (done, lost); 'but if you are not a traitor I will answer for your life.' Could any mortal feel more encouraged than did De la Beauce in hearing the words of this rough man? He begged he might be heard in his own defence, owning, however, that he feared he was an aristocrat by birth.

'That is nothing,' said the man; 'the President is an honest man and not a fool. Speak up and tell the truth. Embrace me.' They embraced and the man bade him adieu, and left the chapel.

At eight o'clock in the evening the agitation of the people seemed to calm, cries were even heard of 'Pardon!' 'Mercy for

those that remain !' which words were received with some, but very feeble, applause. Nevertheless for a time the hopes of those that remained were raised. Some of the more sanguine began to make a bundle of their effects, as though they were at once to be released. Alas ! in a short time they heard the noise of the killing recommence. Outside the crowd cried, 'Priests and conspirators have gained the indulgence of the judges. This is why no more are brought out,' and so faster and faster the victims were presented to the people and smitten down amid shouts of 'Vive la nation !'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL OF THE PEOPLE.

At length, at about one o'clock on Tuesday morning, La Beauce heard his name called. He advanced at once to the door, was seized by three men and dragged to the porter's lodge, where he had had his interview with Virginie. Here by the light of two torches the prisoner for the first time caught sight of the tribunal that was to judge him.

The President, a man in a grey coat with a sword by his side, half sat, half leant on the end of the long table. He was the well-known Maillard, formerly usher of the court and one of the men mainly instrumental in the destruction of the Bastille. On the table was a litter of bottles, pipes, papers, and writing materials. Round the table were ten individuals, some sitting, some lounging ; two were in the dress of workmen in shirt sleeves and aprons. Some others were stretched on benches asleep. In the corner of the room was a man in a cloak who was in deep shadow. At the door stood two men with their sleeves tucked up and their arms covered with blood. A prisoner was being interrogated. Two men in the uniform of the National Guard were presenting a demand for his release from the section of *La Croix Rouge*.

'Such demands,' said the President, 'are of no use for traitors.'

The prisoner here burst out : 'This is horrible ! your judgment is an assassination !'

'I wash my hands of that,' answered the President ; 'conduct Monsieur Maille to La Force. *N'est-ce pas ?*' he asked.

'Yes, yes,' cried the other judges.

At these words the unhappy man was pushed to the street and struck down as he appeared at the door.

The President sat down and wrote, apparently registering the name of M. Maille.

‘Another,’ he said without looking up.

La Beauce was immediately thrust forward, two men holding him by the hands and a third by the collar of his coat.

Notwithstanding all he had gone through, now the critical time had arrived he felt quite calm. For the moment he forgot even wife and child in the intense interest he took in the scene. He cast his eyes round the room. He saw no friend there, not even the friendly sentry. He tried to penetrate the gloom of the room, but the men held him so tight he could not turn his head, and he deemed it best to make no effort to move.

‘Your name and profession,’ said the President.

‘The least prevarication and you are lost,’ added one of the judges.

‘My name,’ said La Beauce in a calm voice, ‘is Etienne de Fonville, called hitherto Comte de la Beauce. I am a proprietor and farmer near Chartres. As I have nothing to conceal there is no reason why I should not speak the truth.’

‘That is what we shall see,’ said the President, referring to a book, evidently the register of the prison. ‘Do you know of what you are accused?’

‘I am accused of being a Royalist, of plotting with the *émigrés*, and raising recruits for the King.’

A murmur ran through the room.

‘Pardon me. I have never left my paternal abode. I have never received a letter from an *émigré*, and as for recruiting, I have entirely occupied myself with the improvement of my own land, and never meddled in such matters. I lived on the best terms with my neighbours.’

‘Aristocrats?’ interrupted the judge.

‘There have been none of that class left for some time past.’

‘Continue,’ said the President.

‘By neighbours I mean the farmers about me who were my tenants. So much was I esteemed by them that, when the châteaux of the neighbourhood were being burnt and pillaged, my tenants to the number of three hundred came to my château of their own accord, to express their affection for me, and their intention to act as a guard to protect me from danger.’

One of the men at the table, who had been indulging in a drunken snooze, here aroused himself and cried:

'Why does this man send us to sleep with his speeches? To the facts.'

Then others joined in protesting against waste of time in speaking. La Beauce was naturally angry. 'M. le Président,' he cried in a loud voice, 'I have a right to be heard. Will you maintain that right? No one could possibly have greater need for the exercise of your authority.'

Some of the men here laughed, remarking that was true, and demanding silence.

'If,' continued La Beauce, 'these gentlemen will allow me the use of my arms, I will prove by my papers truth of my plea.'

Here the men laughed again, and the judge ordered those who held the prisoner to loose 'Monsieur.'

La Beauce then produced his papers.

'This,' said he, 'is the proposition of my friends that I should join the *États Généraux*. I refused, as I thought I should do more good in staying among my own people, where my power of doing good was greatest. Had others thought the same, France would have been spared the painful spectacle she presents to Europe, and there would be few *émigrés* now in arms against their country.'

'Well said,' cried one of the judges.

'I have served in the American War,' continued La Beauce, 'and there I have acquired liberal opinions. I therefore recommended M. Pétion, whom I knew to be a good man, in my place. Here is his letter. This is a testimonial signed by all the tenants without exception, and their request to be allowed to plant a "Mai" in my court-yard. Here are other papers proving I have never left La Beauce for the last three years, ever since I married.'

'It is well,' said the judge; 'your papers shall be examined.' Some of the men at the table then proceeded to examine the documents.

'Another,' cried the President.

A wretched prisoner was introduced. He was asked his name and profession. He hesitated and tried to excuse himself.

'Silence,' cried Maillard sternly, 'and answer my question.' The miserable man gasped, but could say nothing.

'Are you not an abbé? Have you not refused to take the oath prescribed?'

'It is true,' faltered the prisoner.

'Then we need not detain monsieur. Conduct him to La Force.'

The door opened, the prisoner was thrust forth—a few blows—a stifled cry, and all was over!

The crowd outside shouted hoarsely, 'Vive la nation!'

Meanwhile La Beauce's papers were being examined.

'These,' said one of the men, 'seem to prove what you say; but who can tell whether they are false or not?'

From the iron grating above the door came a stentorian voice. 'That can I do.'

La Beauce looked up, and perceived this grating framed a number of heads, and it was one of these that answered. 'Let that man enter,' cried the judge.

There was a bustle at the gate and Jean Durand, much disordered and torn in dress, was pushed into the room.

'Well,' said the judge.

'Monsieur le Président, I know this citizen,' said Durand. 'He is the best landlord in our country. He is the father of his tenants, and, as for me, I can never repay the debt of gratitude I owe him. I can certify to the truth of all he says—nay, more, I am bold enough to say before you, M. le Président, and all here assembled, that had he willed it his tenants would have rescued him from those sent to arrest him, for both they and myself would have died in his defence. But he would not be the man to defy the authorities, and himself forbade the rescue. We were two hundred and against us but ten gendarmes. Monsieur was confident he would be judged fairly in Paris, and knew he was innocent. Do you judge him then,' and Jean raised his arms and motioned to all in the room, 'for in you, as a *sans-culotte*, I have confidence.'

'And how,' said one of the judges, 'are we to know that this is not a plant to procure the release of this man?' Jean turned on the speaker.

'Thou thinkest I am for aristocrats. Wait a bit.' In a moment he stripped off his blouse, and showed his back seamed and scarred by the terrible punishment he had received from the Marquis of Boisseac.

'Thinkest thou I love those who did that, because I helped myself to the beasts who ran wild on God's earth. I hated them I say, but this is not one of that brood. He gave bread instead of stripes, and pity in the place of contumely.'

Jean's evidence was greatly applauded, and some said 'This man must be innocent.'

'But,' said the judge, 'there is no smoke without fire. How came you to be here? Does anyone know?'

'I do,' said a voice from the dark part of the room, and the man in the cloak came into the light. It was Rousselet. He looked calm though very pale.

'Dost thou know the cause, Citoyen Rousselet?' asked the President.

'I denounced him myself,' said Rousselet in a deep voice.

There was here quite a sensation in the room.

'Yes,' continued Rousselet, 'I accused this citizen! Three years ago the daughter of a dear friend disappeared. I loved her, loved her deeply, hopelessly. I suspected this man of having led her away and shamefully betrayed her. Is it not the way of the class to which he belongs?' A hoarse murmur bore witness to the truth of this remark. 'I bided my time till our revolution put it in my power to denounce him, and I procured the mandate of the Commune for his arrest at Chartres where he lived.' Here there were loud cries of 'Well done!' mixed with some of 'A la Force, à la Force!'

'One moment,' shouted Rousselet with a commanding gesture. 'The best of us make mistakes. I found Citoyen de Fonville was not like these insolent aristocrats. He had taken the girl away to marry her, and it is she who has aided him in all his efforts to do good among his people.'

'How are we to know this?' asked the President.

'Here,' said Rousselet, 'is the attestation of M. le Maire to the truth of what I say. I who hated this man now declare him innocent, and, to prove it, if you do sentence him, I go to execution with him, and my breast receives the first thrust directed against his life.'

Rousselet said this with so exalted an air that there were loud cries of applause.

'Time presses,' cried the President, taking off his hat. 'I believe this testimony and see nothing to suspect in monsieur, I therefore accord him his liberty. Do you agree?'

All the others cried, '*Oui, oui*, it is just.'

But the drunken man, waking again, cried, '*Oui, oui*; à la Force, à la Force!' At which there was a general laugh.

The President then said, '*Citoyen*, you are free.'

Immediately loud cries of 'Bravo!' resounded through the room, and even from the grating whence peered the red and hot faces of the outside crowd. The President then charged three persons to announce the sentence of the court.

La Beauce turning to Rousselet embraced him, saying 'You

are a brave man!' The painter was much moved; 'Ah, monsieur!' he murmured. The Comte de la Beauce then gave his hand to Jean, and between the two, escorted by the three deputies who had returned from their mission, prepared to leave the room. First, however, he turned to the President and bowed, saying, 'I thank you, monsieur, and you, gentlemen. I was confident in the justice of my countrymen. Will you further oblige me by giving me a certificate of my release lest malicious people accuse me of escaping?'

'Your release shall be sent after you,' said the President.

The deputies bid La Beauce put on his hat and conducted him to the door of the prison, where one crying 'Chapeau bas!' La Beauce uncovered before the sovereign people. 'Citizens,' cried a deputy, 'behold one for whom your judges demand aid and assistance.' Immediately there were cries of 'Vive la nation!' and with Rousselet and Jean, lighted by four torches, the Comte was led into the square. Glancing around he saw a terrible sight. In one corner there was a litter of straw on which the victims were placed after they were massacred, and on which were displayed their clothes, canes, and property. Round were benches for the lookers on who were arranged as at a theatre, the women being given the front places. But many now crowded round La Beauce, their arms and clothes covered with blood, warmly congratulating him on his innocence, and insisting on receiving the *accolade*, or embrace of friendship. Thus making his way through the crowd he passed rows of women knitting and talking eagerly. The Comte was clad in his usual costume, a dark-blue coat, nankeen breeches, and light-coloured silk stockings; as he passed these women one cried to him, 'Take care of your stockings, monsieur.' He looked down. The gutter he was crossing was running with blood!

On leaving the square and passing through the gate of the prison he saw a man girt with a municipal scarf who was haranguing the people. He heard him say, 'People! you sacrifice your enemies and do your duty. You have earned the homage of your country.' The man was dressed in a puce-coloured coat and had on a small black wig. La Beauce saw him frequently afterwards: it was Billaud de Varennes!

Escorted by the three deputies the Comte proceeded towards the hotel, in which Jean informed him Virginie was lodging, which was in the Rue du Bac. The deputies chatted and laughed as they walked; one, a mason, asked the Comte whether he had

been afraid. La Beauce answered that he was quite cool while he was being tried, and not the least afraid in the courtyard. 'It is not fear, but disgust, I felt at seeing brave men so employed, and women looking on at such a sight.'

'Monsieur is right,' said another deputy, who was dressed in the uniform of the National Guard. 'It is a fearful task, but what would you have? All Paris is rushing against the enemy, and we men cannot afford to leave our defenceless wives and daughters to the tender mercies of these traitors.'

'Ah,' said the other, a barber, 'monsieur is very right in the way he spoke of the *émigrés*. It is those *scélérats* who have forced us to this. And to think that for many years I shaved many of them every day. If I had them now!' cried the man of lather waving his hand.

These people but spoke the opinions of Parisians in general. During these massacres there were, according to the lowest estimates, nearly one thousand four hundred killed, and the number of *égorgeurs* or *tueurs* was said to be only three hundred!

The theatres these nights were full and everything in Paris went on as usual. Within a short distance of the Abbaye prison there were two battalions of National Guards; not a command was given to them during these days of disorder. They mustered, drilled, and were dismissed as though their services were not wanted. Yet one battalion in five minutes might have stopped everything!

On reaching the Rue du Bac the morning was breaking peacefully. Paris was looking clean, white, and beautiful in the grey light of dawn—that dawn that so many hundred Frenchmen were not permitted to see!

On their arrival at the hotel La Beauce would have pressed a sum of money on his escort, but they refused. 'We do not do this for money,' they cried; 'we will drink a small glass of *eau-de-vie* to the health of monsieur, and when we have received a certificate that he has safely been conducted to his house, we will return to our post.'

La Beauce had no difficulty in rousing the landlord of the hotel. That worthy appeared in *deshabille* with a pale and terror-stricken face at the first summons. But when he saw the Comte whom he knew, he burst into tears and threw himself into his arms. The *eau-de-vie* was quickly produced, and the certificate given. La Beauce apologised to his friends for not allowing them

to see the meeting between him and his wife ; ' Madame,' he said, ' was not prepared and the hour was very unseasonable.'

' We understand,' cried the National Guard. ' We are married men.' They all three embraced the Comte, Rousselet, and Jean, and departed.

Rousselet would himself have retired had not La Beauce laid his hand on his shoulder and said kindly, ' My friend, I owe you so much that I cannot express my thanks—my wife will join me in doing so.' With that he took Rousselet and Jean each by the hand, and, preceded by the landlord, ascended to his wife's sitting-room.

Virginie and Célimène were both dressed. Their agitation had been so great that they determined to start for the prison at the first appearance of dawn. They heard the knocking at the door and had trembled at the sound. They heard, too, the adieus of the deputies. And listening in their terror they heard steps coming up the stairs. What could it be ? The door of the sitting-room which communicated with their bedroom opened and people entered. Their hearts stopped beating. What voice was that ? Virginie rushed forward and sank fainting into the arms of her husband.

They say people die of joy ! Oh, happy death ! Instead of the agony of a parting, the joy of meeting ! The last object seen the loved face, the last sound heard the well-loved voice, the last touch the loved one's arms. Who would not so die ?

Virginie did not die. She, under the care of Célimène and her husband, slowly recovered consciousness. But as her eyes opened, and her reason returned, when she saw her loved husband with pale, haggard face, with his clothes disordered, and covered with blood (the result of his many *accolades* with the *tueurs*), she well nigh fainted again. The Comte, however, ceased not to assure her that he was well and unhurt, and she grew calmer, though her trembling hands ever and anon sought his to see that it was really he, and that his kisses were not the effect of a dream.

At length she regained her habitual colour, and asked what had happened.

' My dear wife,' said La Beauce gravely, ' I have passed a great peril. I cannot now tell you what, it is sufficient that it has been passed. But that I am here now, alive and well, you must thank my two friends who are standing there.'

Virginie turned towards Rousselet and Jean. The tears came to her eyes. She advanced towards them with outstretched hands.

'Ah!' she murmured, 'I knew I could trust you two.' She took Rousselet's hand, and with a sweet smile raised it to her lips. The poor fellow, pale as death, trembled from head to foot. His lips strove to speak but no sound came, he faltered, and would have fallen had not Jean caught him. Turning in the arms of the stalwart peasant, hiding his face on his shoulder, he burst into a paroxysm of tears.

'See you, madame,' said Jean in a low voice, 'monsieur has been in the prison since the beginning, and I do not think he has touched a drop of water the while.' The generous fellow did not say his watch had been as long, though perhaps not so abstemious.

The landlord had already divined that the people who had gone through so much must require some sustenance. He appeared at the door with a well-filled tray; and a draught of wine brought back the colour to the pale face of poor Rousselet. Virginie insisted on their all sitting down to eat while she and Célimène waited on them. Not much was said. The terrors of the preceding two days began to tell. The joy of meeting was an excitement which sustained only for a time, and already La Beauce was dropping with fatigue when a light tap at the door roused him. It was poor Jacques Le Blanc, who, having secured a bed at the hotel, had been roused by the landlord with the joyful news of the Comte's release. He entered, on being bid, with the shamefaced look of one who felt he intruded; but Virginie came forward and, tenderly embracing him, led him to her husband.

'Etienne,' she said, 'thou rememberest my father, the tenderest and best of men, without whom these last two days would have killed me.'

'Monsieur Le Blanc,' said the Comte, taking both the good man's hands, 'we both owe you some reparation. Unintentionally I have caused you much pain; forgive me.'

'Ah, Monsieur le Comte,' cried Jacques, in a voice husky with emotion, 'it is I who was to blame.'

But all felt the necessity of repose, and Jacques himself led off Rousselet and Jean, and left the Comte de la Beauce to the tender care of his wife.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A LIFE OF SUSPENSE.

LA BEAUCE, after a good sleep, of which he stood greatly in need, felt quite himself again. Not so Virginie. The anxieties of the last three days had quite upset her nerves. The power she possessed of suppressing all outward signs of emotion was exercised with a waste of vital energy, which in the end told on her health. So all the day of September 4 had to be spent in quiet and rest.

It was settled during the day that it would be advisable for the family to take up their abode with Jacques le Blanc. Rousselet pointed out the impossibility of returning to Chartres, where the Comte would be a marked man. In Paris, by dropping his title, which was now illegal, and by living quietly with his father-in-law, he might disarm all suspicion. Besides, he would be furnished with a certificate of innocence by the Patriotic tribunal before which he had appeared at the Abbaye, which would protect him from any molestation from the Sovereign People of Paris, but which in the provinces might not be respected.

‘I can never sufficiently blame myself,’ said Rousselet, ‘for having imagined you, M. le Comte——’

‘Say Citoyen de Fonville,’ suggested La Beauce with a smile.

‘For having imagined you were like the rest of your class,’ continued Rousselet. ‘It was a dastardly act of mine——’

Here Le Blanc who was present blew his nose with his pocket-handkerchief, which was hardly so red as his blushing face.

‘Of mine,’ repeated Rousselet, looking sternly at his friend, ‘to denounce you——’

‘Monsieur Rousselet,’ interrupted the Comte gaily, ‘say no more. You have nobly retrieved your error; I can never forget what I owe you. Your advice is no doubt excellent, and, if my worthy father-in-law will take us in, we shall be proud to be indebted to him for shelter.’

‘Ah, M. le Comte, it is I that am proud!’ cried Le Blanc.

‘There is only one thing I would impress on you,’ said La Beauce, ‘and that is that the Comte de la Beauce has ceased to exist, and that your daughter is the wife of Citoyen de Fonville.’

‘To me,’ cried Le Blanc, bowing, ‘you will always be the

Comte. Ah, friend Rousselet, in what a mess is this Republic of thine! It is true,' he added, meditatively, 'that to clear a *consommé* you require the whites of many eggs!'

'Yes,' replied La Beauce, 'but how if the eggs are more valuable than the *consommé*?'

That afternoon the certificate promised by President Maillard was brought by the National Guard who had acted as escort to La Beauce the day before. It was as follows:

'We, commissioners appointed by the people to do justice on the traitors detained in the prison of the Abbaye, have, on the 4th of September, made appear before us Citoyen Etienne Fonville, *rentier*, who has proved the accusation brought against him to be false, that he has never entered into any plots against patriots: we have proclaimed him innocent in the presence of the people, who approved of the liberty we granted him. In testimony of which we have given him this certificate on his demand, and we invite all citizens to accord him aid and succour.'

This document was dated, 'A l'Abbaye, l'an IV. de la liberté et le 1^{er} de l'égalité,' and was signed by two names, presumably two of the judges.

Virginie, hearing a strange voice in the sitting-room, was so alarmed that, pale and weak as she was, she got up and walked into the room while the deputy was talking.

La Beauce presented him, saying, 'This is one of the good friends who assisted in releasing me from prison.'

Virginie offered her hand, saying, 'The thanks of a wife, monsieur, must be welcome to one who wears the uniform that protects the State.'

'Ah, madame,' cried the deputy, who was dressed in the uniform of the National Guard, raising Virginie's hand with gallantry to his lips, 'it was only traitors who had reason to fear. This citizen is too brave a man to be a traitor.'

Virginie looked at her husband. He had been afraid of telling her the story of the wholesale massacre he had witnessed, but he dared not stop this man.

'Those,' cried the man, 'on whom the people exercised their right of justice were all plotters against the Republic. They died the death of dogs as they deserved, a death they would have inflicted on all Paris had they had their way.'

'Were they,' said Virginie, trembling and white, 'were they then all killed?'

'All except your husband and some dozen more who proved their innocence,' said the man.

Virginie reeled and fell senseless on the floor.

'Pardon! a thousand pardons!' cried the National Guard.

'Madame is delicate, and I had not dared to tell her,' whispered La Beauce, as he lifted his senseless wife on to a sofa.

But the National Guard was inconsolable. Had he not a wife of his own? How could he have been so stupid? And he brought water to sprinkle her face, and did not leave the room till he had seen Virginie restored to consciousness through the aid of La Beauce and Célimène.

'Ah, madame, how shall I excuse myself? One must be *bête* to talk of such things before women,' he pleaded, apologetically. This man had been witness to the terrible scenes of the preceding days. He had borne the sight of the carnage and horrors committed in the Abbaye prison without being affected by them, but the sight of a fainting woman had aroused the feelings of a man in his breast, for, as he said, he had a wife and children of his own! Such are the contradictions of human nature!

The next day La Beauce conveyed his family to the apartments of Jacques Le Blanc. That happy man was there to receive them. With delight he embraced his daughter. 'See,' he cried, 'I have thy room always ready. It is the furniture of her room at Sèvres, monsieur. I fear the apartment is small. Such as it is, I place it at the service of M. le Comte—pardon,' he added, 'I forget myself, but when none are by I must permit myself to offer the homage due to the rank of monsieur.'

The busy Louison quickly installed herself as the servant of the party. For their meals Jacques begged to be accounted answerable, and, indeed, the *déjeuner* he served on their arrival was of so excellent a kind that it would have been difficult to find fault with it. La Beauce insisted on his sitting at table with them. 'It would be wrong and, indeed, be calculated to raise suspicion if you did not join us. You must remember we are all here of one family.' But Jacques was full of anxiety. He watched each dish as it was served. He grew pale as his experienced taste became aware of some want which no other than he detected. He cast furtive glances around to see the effect on his son-in-law. All his gaiety was gone, and he looked so miserable that even Célimène could not get a word from him. But for the little Jacques, before whom was placed the memorable silver goblet, the company would have been dull enough. That

youth was delighted with everything. He had seen the soldiers, and many like the doll Louison had bought him, and his questions were endless. Virginie was still pale and worn out. La Beauce silent and anxious as to his future. So the conversation was entirely between little Jacques and Célimène.

At length when the meal was over Jacques le Blanc rose to retire. 'Excuse me,' he said bowing, 'the business requires all my attention, and now is the busy time.' He was in truth bursting with suppressed emotion. In the presence of his noble son-in-law he was ashamed to show how much he felt. The *convenances* of society awed him, and he longed to be back again among his saucepans, where he could let loose his tongue and scold his satellites to his heart's content. As he left the room La Beauce followed him and, placing his hand kindly on his shoulder, said, 'My good Le Blanc, if you will permit me to call you so, I must request you, as the only condition on which I accept your hospitality, to use these rooms as if we were not here. Virginie has told me your love for her; show it in coming here frequently. I am but a useless appendage, at least at present. I should be deeply grieved if I thought I brought any unnecessary discomfort on you.'

'Ah, monsieur,' cried Le Blanc, his eyes filling with tears, 'it is an honour for me to have you with me. To see my dear daughter so happy with you is for me a sufficient reward for all I can do.'

'Recollect,' answered La Beauce, 'if you do not become one of the family you will arouse suspicions which may end in destroying us all.'

So pressed Jacques yielded. Gradually the little circle grew more intimate. Waited on by Louison and Jean, Virginie was soon restored to health. She sought occupation in the household duties which naturally fall to the share of all good women. She found time to assist her father in his business, she and Célimène learning to keep his books and accounts, and so taking a deal of responsibility off Jacques' shoulders. La Beauce was the least happy of the little household. He wearied of having no occupation, for he was naturally of an active disposition. He wandered about Paris as much as he dared. He even penetrated into the Assembly itself, which was now called the National Convention, and listened to the orators who there sought to settle the affairs of the nation. But to his practical mind there seemed little done. There was a great deal of talk and much bitter recrimination,

The politicians of the day did not seem to know how to combine. Jealousy kept individuals apart. Politics seemed nothing but chicanery, from which his mind revolted.

So passed the autumn and winter, till in December came the trial of the King. By this time La Beauce had fallen into a state of listless indifference. Everything seemed to him to be slipping to chaos. No man, great enough to sway the course of events, had appeared. The King seemed doomed before he was tried. Though some individuals dared to raise their voices in his defence, no party in the Convention espoused his cause. No one expressed a doubt as to the guilt of poor Louis. It is only over the legality of the trial that honourable members quibble and fight. For the forty hours during which his fate was being voted La Beauce was in a state of terrible agitation. Though not a fervid Royalist his soul revolted against the injustice of the trial. But there was nothing to be done—absolutely nothing. When sentence of death was finally pronounced, consternation fell on the family. Till the last La Beauce had hoped for a decree of deposition, not death. Virginie wept bitterly for the King, but even more for the Queen. She could picture to herself the agony of the poor woman, a prisoner—perhaps forbidden to see the father of her children. Had she not herself passed those terrible days of September in suspense? Yet she had then no sure knowledge of death being so near her loved one. She was in such a state of nervous excitement that La Beauce was forced to stay with her, himself hardly less moved.

That Saturday evening, when little Jacques said his prayer, Virginie taught him to add, ‘God keep poor Louis, and pity his wife and children!’ and be sure she and Célimène prayed too for the unfortunate family. Then late at night La Beauce crept out to gain news of the last voting. He hoped yet there might be a reprieve, that the sentence was a mere form, and that mercy would be shown. He stole down to the café where he had seldom appeared and found it still full. The streets, too, were crowded with people, asking what news? In their anxiety men wandered listlessly around the hall in which Louis’ fate was being finally decided. So they continued all that night. Nor was it till three o’clock on Sunday morning that the news blazed abroad from the Convention, that death was decreed in twenty-four hours! It was Sunday, January 20.

That Sunday was a day of silent mourning to the little family.

Both Virginie and Célimène dressed themselves in black and only appeared at meals, which were eaten in silence. Even little Jacques was consigned to the care of Louison, who kept him away from his mother. Before that day there had been many condemned to death with less cause, and many hundreds afterwards, but somehow the man Louis represented so much that his approaching death seemed to end all the old state of things. What would come after? What could be expected of men who had no reverence for the Lord's elect? So thought these two women, who were like all good women fervent believers in what they had been taught.

But, however men may differ, the great course of nature rolls on the same. The dawn of January 21 was not delayed by the doubts of the 'moderates' or hurried on one moment by the impatience of the 'extremists.' On that day the King was to die! In spite of the tears of Virginie, La Beauce could not remain within doors. Ashamed of himself for his nervous excitement, feeling as though the guilt of the crime was in part his, accusing himself of the faults of his class, he made his way, he hardly knew how, to the corner of the Place Louis XV., now called Place de la Révolution. There he waited, amidst a vast crowd, till the coach in which Louis sat rolled by. All La Beauce could see was a figure in a puce-coloured coat bending over a book and by his side a priest. A few minutes' pause—they seemed hours to the anxious La Beauce—and the same figure appeared on the little scaffold on which stood the guillotine. Louis was there without his coat. He seemed to resist being pinioned, but the priest said something and he submitted. Then the King began to speak, but drums beat loudly; the poor man was seized and, struggling violently, dragged to the terrible machine. There was a flash and all was over! Sick at the heart the Comte de la Beauce fled back to his house. What hope was there now for him? What could he do? Emigrate? Would that bring him quiet or safety for his family, even if he should succeed in getting away from France, where everyone seemed filled with suspicion, and on the watch for treason? And then his heart was filled with rage against these *émigrés*, whose desertion had been so fatal to their cause, and whose ignorance of the course of French opinion seemed so utterly stupid. He determined come what would he would not fly his country. He would do what he could for order and peace even though it should cost him his life. Only what should he do?

Thus perplexed La Beauce miserably passed his time: Virginie

with all her affection for him could not help him. Without fixed purpose he wandered to and fro. Rousselet, whose advice had proved so useful, seemed to have deserted them.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AN APPOINTMENT.

ONE morning a few days after, as he was walking by the doors of the Assembly, he passed a man whose appearance seemed familiar to him. He had a stern, determined face, full of energy, with the unmistakable precision of a soldier. His well-knit figure and brisk movement gave an impression of power. He was dressed with more care than the generality of the members of the Assembly, who rather affected the negligence of attire found among the people. His quick glance caught the recognition of La Beauce. - He stopped and turned.

'Unless I am mistaken,' said the stranger, 'you are the *ci-devant* Comte de la Beauce.'

In those days of suspicion a recognition was not always what a man desired. But La Beauce was not wanting in courage.

'And what if I be that man?' he replied.

The stranger held out his hand. 'Have no fear,' he said; 'I am Lazare Carnot, who once taught you mathematics and military science.'

The Comte took his hand. It was an unusual pleasure for him to find a friend.

'Monsieur Carnot,' he said, 'I feared you would not care to recognise me. I am glad you have not forgotten the pupil who profited so much by your instruction.'

Carnot looked around. 'In this place we can have but little conversation. Come to my house, I may be of use to you.' Then he, having given him his address, and bidden him come the next day in the morning, bowed and briskly went on his way.

To have seen some one who recognised him and did not denounce him was an unexpected pleasure to the Comte. He was certainly armed with the certificate of release he had obtained at the Abbaye, which he was told would hold good against any future denunciation. But he heard of many again consigned to prison as 'suspects.' M. Cazotte, for instance, who had been saved by the heroism of his daughter, had been re-imprisoned, and it

was said things would go hard with him this time. Therefore to have found one among the legislators of the Convention who unsolicited had claimed him as friend was reassuring. He hurried home to see Rousselet, and ascertain through him the amount of influence enjoyed by his new-found friend.

Rousselet was that day to dine with them. In truth he would have given a great deal to take his place as one of the family, among whom he always found a warm and affectionate welcome. But he deemed it prudent to deny himself this pleasure. He had found that his conduct at the Hôtel de Ville and his subsequent efforts to procure the release of La Beauce had roused the suspicions of Billaud de Varenne, and other uncompromising supporters of the September massacres. He feared that, by coming constantly to the house, he might connect himself with the La Beauce family and draw upon them some of the suspicion he felt attached itself to him. Therefore he had purposely abstained from visiting his old friend, pleading as an excuse his engrossing duties as president of the sectional committee. He was too jealous of the reputation of his beloved Republic to state the real cause.

The little party which assembled at dinner that day were unusually cheerful. Virginie, restored to health, sat with Rousselet on one side and little Jacques on the other, with the famous silver tankard before him, while Jacques sat opposite between Célimène, who sat next to Rousselet, and the Comte. They laughed and talked and jested merrily.

'*Mon cher Rousselet,*' said La Beauce, as dinner finished and little Jacques had retired with Louison, 'I have to ask your advice as one who knows Paris and its rulers. What sort of a man is Carnot?'

'Carnot,' answered Rousselet, 'is one of the sincerest of Republicans, one of the most respected of the party of the Mountain, and has been lately appointed one of the committee of management. He is named as the future minister of war, on which subject he has already studied and written much. Why do you ask?'

La Beauce told his story.

'I am rejoiced to hear you have obtained his countenance,' said Rousselet. 'What if he were to propose to send you to the army? Would you go?'

La Beauce was struck dumb with astonishment. Should he go? Virginie looked anxiously at him.

'It would be your safety,' continued Rousselet. 'I urge it not selfishly. I am conscious of the sacrifice you must make in fighting for a Republic of which you do not approve. But you would be also fighting the enemies of France, enemies who would lay waste with fire and sword the whole of our country, who would force on 25,000,000 Frenchmen a king whom they despise, and a slavery which they will never again tolerate. Choose between the service of a Republic representing the sense of the nation, and those invaders who seek to establish a tyranny supported by foreign bayonets.'

'I choose rather,' answered La Beauce without hesitation, 'the Republic than the kingdom so supported.'

Rousselet took his hand. 'You have judged,' he said with emotion, 'as I expected, and, having so judged, I may further urge a plea which would have no weight with a brave man were he alone in the world, but which you, having madame and your son dependent on you, will perhaps consider, namely, your own safety. With the army you would be safe, save from the chances of war, and your family anyhow would be secure, for the wives and children of those who serve their country are sacred. Remaining here you are not safe. You are a man of too great mark to escape observation. You could not live the life of a fossil; you could not exist much longer without some occupation, and whatever you did would be sure to draw attention to you.'

Rousselet paused, and Virginie, whose large eyes had been eagerly fixed on her husband with a look of deep emotion, now walked to him, and placing her arm round his neck, said:

'Etienne, what M. Rousselet says is the truth. If you are offered a place in the army, accept; and if you are not, ask this M. Carnot, who is under obligation to you, to help you thus to escape from Paris. I could bear the thought of your peril there better, a thousand times, than the constant danger you would run here. Have no fear for us. My father, and this our kind friend, will protect us, and at least we shall know that you are free from denunciation and all the horrors you escaped so short a time ago.'

The Comte kissed his wife tenderly. 'I will do as you advise, my dear,' he said. 'I shall trust you to these my friends with confidence.'

'M. le Comte,' said Le Blanc, 'be sure I shall guard my child and yours while I live; the trust will be dearer to me than my life.'

Rousselet said nothing. He was very pale, his lips trembled,

and his bright eye gleamed. It was a tear that rose uncalled and lingered there. Was it regret or envy? No! a thousand times no! This man, who loved so deeply and so hopelessly, had a truth and honesty in him that led him to scorn meanness. He had hated himself for being led away once. He had striven to convince himself that it was patriotism that had made him denounce La Beauce, but his conscience had told him all along that he had deceived himself. And at the first touch of the truth this fabric of hate had fallen. He loved none the less because he loved hopelessly. He was content now to watch over the happiness of her he loved; what if that happiness was centred in another? As well he as anyone else—nay, better, for he knew he was worthy of love; and then, too, having contributed to liberate this man from the perils of the Abbaye, he had in some sort established an interest in him. He knew he had given him sound advice, but had feared this Comte, with aristocratic prejudices, would have refused to serve the Republic. When, then, he found it was not so, his joy was great, and he believed that whatever happened to him, Rousselet, as he already was aware that he himself was threatened, she would at least be safe.

There was silence in the little room. The boy had retired with Célimène and Louison. La Beauce and Virginie were occupied with each other, and Rousselet was filled with these thoughts. As for honest Jacques, having blown his nose to conceal his emotion, he cried in a voice still husky:

‘What a pity our country is ruled by such madmen! But,’ he added in a conciliatory tone, ‘to be sure the more the water boils, the more the scum will rise to the top.’

La Beauce, recalled to himself, smiled. ‘Le Blanc, you are a philosopher. It is a pity you, who are an honest man, are not at the helm of the State.’

‘Thank you,’ cried Le Blanc, ‘I have enough to do with my saucepans—they at least can be kept bright and clean.’

Rousselet took his leave of the little family that night with some emotion.

The next day the Comte, punctual to his time appointed, appeared at the door of the apartment occupied by Carnot. He was shown into a good-sized room, where, amidst a multitude of papers and maps, sat the man he had met the day before. Carnot rose to receive his old pupil.

‘I am glad you have come,’ he said; ‘the gardens of the Tui-

leries are not a safe place in which to be seen talking with a *ci-devant*. Not that I fear anything,' he said with a smile, 'but, in these unsettled days, the least thing gives an excuse to one's enemies to lessen one's credit. Pray be seated.'

The Comte sat down.

'It is very good of you, M. Carnot,' he said, 'to have remembered me after so many years.'

'I never forget,' answered Carnot, 'especially those to whom I am under an obligation. Now to business. You are an aristocrat.'

'Pardon me,' interrupted La Beauce, 'I never was an aristocrat except by birth.'

'I admit what you say, but by birth you have been marked with the mark of Cain—oh! I know the injustice of my words, I only speak as a member of the ruling committee of the New Republic. You may be denounced any day. There are many who fancy they can recognise a "suspect" they meet in the streets. Once denounced, you are lost, for you cannot deny your birth and parentage. Now for old acquaintance' sake I would save you. I know your ability, I have in years past studied your character, you have served too in the army; men like you are wanted. I want them; I am engaged in reorganising the army. Will you serve the Republic against the invaders of your country?'

'Monsieur, I was prepared to ask you to procure for me a post in that army,' answered La Beauce.

'It is well,' said Carnot, glancing sharply at him. 'You are then a Republican?'

'If you ask me whether I approve of many of the deeds of this Republic——' answered the Comte.

'I ask no such thing,' interrupted Carnot. 'No one can approve all the deeds of a popular government. I only ask, are you a Republican?'

'In the abstract, yes!' answered La Beauce.

'Good,' said Carnot, 'that is all I ask. Keep that faith and say as little as you can. Never express your opinions on politics, and above all of politicians. You will make a good soldier I have no doubt. Are you married?'

'I am,' said the Comte.

'Your wife and children shall be safe while you are away, and you yourself, as long as you do your duty, shall be protected. Now, let me see. When can you join the army? The day after to-morrow?'

'I will leave Paris the day after to-morrow,' said La Beauce with an effort.

'That's well,' answered the other. 'Write now the address of your wife and the name under which she lives.' The Comte wrote as requested. Carnot glanced at the paper. He then made out an order which he handed to La Beauce. 'This,' he said, 'is your permit or, indeed, order to join the army under General Dumouriez. I shall be there before you, and will see you get a captain's command at once. Be zealous and silent; above all never whisper you owe your appointment to your old acquaintance.' He rose, as he said this, with a smile, and held out his hand. 'No thanks,' he added, leading La Beauce to the door. Then, as an afterthought, 'By the bye, your name is Chardon, I believe.'

The Comte bowed and, full of confusion, left the house. The paper he held in his hand ordered 'Captain Chardon to join the army under General Dumouriez as captain in the 7th regiment of cavalry!'

The interview had not lasted five minutes! La Beauce was quite stunned by the change so suddenly wrought in his life. To alter his name was not a new idea. He had already debated in his mind the advisability of sinking his aristocratic identity. But this Carnot had done it by a stroke of a pen, and in Captain Chardon, of the 7th Cavalry, he hardly recognised himself. Carnot knew he had served a time in the royal army, he knew, none better, that he had a head to command, and in a moment he had determined to use him. In two days! Such a short time! His heart leaped with pleasure at leaving Paris where every person he met seemed a spy to denounce him, where every day things seemed to get into a greater and more chaotic confusion, and where he appeared doomed to idleness and inaction! Then as he drew near home he thought of Virginie, and the terror in which she had lived since their departure from Chartres. How her eyes watched him as he left the house, and what glad welcome greeted him on his safe return! The dangers of war! Had not all soldiers to face them, and did not the greater number return safe and sound? What were these dangers to those of Paris? And as he walked along, he held his head erect, and fearlessly looked each passer-by in the face, feeling that he was a man again!

Virginie was eagerly expecting his return. When he told her the news she grew pale, but there was no faltering in her voice as she congratulated him, no hesitation as she encouraged him in

his determination. Célimène seemed, indeed, more overcome, shedding many tears at the idea of losing her cousin, until the boy himself began to howl from very sympathy, and Virginie turned rather sharply on her and said, 'Thou shouldst not show thy grief; seest thou not that thou causest the boy to cry?' Then she added in a grave voice, 'Is it not for his safety that he leaves us?'

When Le Blanc joined them at the noonday meal and heard the news, he took La Beauce by the hand and gripped it in his fat palms. 'Monsieur le Comte,' he whispered, 'you may depend on me.' And the son-in-law knew that he meant what he said and returned the friendly clasp.

Le Blanc strove to enliven the meal with many a cheery speech. He found himself driven, as he had been on that fatal day of the September massacres, to joking with the child, and he and the boy laughed and talked while the others were silent and thoughtful. When the meal was over, he drew the Comte aside, and whispered in his ear: 'Monsieur le Comte will not hesitate to let me know if funds are necessary to fit him out. I am but a poor *aubergiste*, but I have been a careful man, and have stowed away a goodly sum, which I need not say is quite at the service of my Virginie's husband.'

La Beauce was touched at the good fellow's kindness. 'Should I require anything I shall not scruple to trespass on your kindness,' he said. 'Happily, Virginie has the sum requisite for my wants; meanwhile remember you have now the wife of Capitaine Chardon in your care.' He smiled sadly at the feeble attempt to raise a joke. He knew he was right to go.

At that moment a man's gruff voice was heard at the door asking for Capitaine Chardon, and Jean's voice was heard in reply. Luckily La Beauce, having been led to the door to receive Le Blanc's confidences, heard, and recognised the situation at once. He threw open the door and cried angrily to Jean, 'Imbecile, let the *citoyen* enter!'

Jean stood on one side filled with astonishment, and a man in the uniform of a cavalry soldier with enormous moustachios, and long hair plaited on each side of his head, as was common to the revolutionary army, entered the room. He gave a military salute: 'Le Capitaine Chardon?'

'Me voici!' answered the Comte.

'A despatch from the Ministry of War,' cried the soldier, producing a letter.

'Give it,' said La Beauce, and, taking the letter from the man, he broke the seal and retired to the window to read it.

The soldier stood at attention awaiting the answer. Little Jacques, having gazed some time at him with astonishment and delight, now toddled to him, and stood in front of him inspecting his accoutrements. The soldier bore the scrutiny with indifference for some time. Gradually the stern features of the man relaxed into a smile. Virginie, watching the scene, now came forward. '*Mon brave*,' she said, 'wilt thou have a drink of wine?'

'Willingly,' said the soldier, 'to drink the health of the little Capitaine, Madame la Capitaine.' Virginie filled a glass from the table where the *déjeuner* was still spread and gave it to the man. He saluted and took the glass, 'To the health of the little *citoyen*!' he said, and drained it at one draught. '*Jarnidieu*,' he muttered, looking at the empty glass, 'one gets not wine like that every day.'

'To what regiment do you belong?' asked Virginie.

'Seventh Cavalry.'

'The regiment to which monsieur—my husband,' said Virginie in confusion, having nearly said his name, 'is appointed.'

'So much the better,' cried the man; 'we want to be led. There are many men and few leaders, or we should not have run as we did at Dam Martin!'

'You were in the Argonne then?'

'*Corbleu*! and at Valmy,' said the soldier with pride.

'Do you wish to get back?'

'I like not Paris and these *petits avocats*,' said the soldier.

La Beauce, having read the despatch, now joined the little group. 'This letter,' he said, 'mentions that there is a detachment of your regiment in the Champ de Mars.'

'True, Capitaine,' answered the man.

'I go with you then,' said La Beauce.

'By command I have brought a horse for the Capitaine.'

'Descend then, and wait for me.'

The man saluted and left the room.

Virginie embraced the Comte and cried, 'Etienne, I breathe once more; with comrades such as that you will be happy.' In truth the change in her husband was already very marked: the eye flashed, the colour mounted to his cheek, he felt a man again, and not the skulking, suspicious animal his danger had forced him to appear. He told Virginie he had been bid by the Minister of War to proceed at once to take the command of a squadron of the 7th now in Paris, and as soon as their outfit was complete,

which, the despatch said, must be in a couple of days, depart with them for the front. He kissed his wife and cousin and, arraying himself in a pair of riding boots and coat, descended the stairs. At the door he found the corporal with another trooper and spare horse, on which he leaped and cantered away.

It was late when he returned. When Jean opened the door, his master said kindly to him, 'I was sorry to have spoken so hardly to thee, my friend; my safety depended on it. I am now Capitaine Chardon remember.'

Jean bowed. 'Monsieur is too kind. I learn that monsieur is about to go to the war, and I have a favour to ask.'

'What is it, my good Jean?'

'Monsieur,' answered Jean, 'this Paris suits me not. I am of no use to madame or the little monsieur, and I am not content. Will monsieur take me with him?'

'Why, Jean, dost thou wish to be a soldier?'

'I wish to go with monsieur. Madame will, I am sure, be glad to have some one with you,' he said in a low voice.

The Comte placed his hand on Jean's shoulder. He well understood Jean's feelings.

'Thou shalt come,' he said. 'Thou wilt make a good dragoon, I know thou canst ride.' He then passed into his wife's room, where she was eagerly expecting his return.

The next two days were busy ones for the Comte. What a blessed change to him after the forced idleness of the four last months! Even Virginie was cheered, in spite of the haunting idea of their approaching separation, by the change in her husband. With his uniform *La Beauce* put on all the briskness of the soldier. He had much to do and much to settle, but in the two days allowed all was done. What little time he could afford to spend with his family was not passed in tears and grief. The two women had much to occupy them in fitting out their soldier. With the help of Louison, and by much hard work, they managed in two days to provide him with all those comforts which a woman's hands can only supply. By an heroic effort Virginie never once showed her husband how much she felt his departure, and Célimène, in worthy emulation, managed to control her generally demonstrative feelings. As to little Jacques, the idea that his father and dear Jean were going to be soldiers fired him with martial ardour. He had a little sword too, and Louison made him a little helmet, and the boy spent his days in marshalling the furniture and making mimic charges, to the great inconvenience of

his mother and cousin. Not even on the last evening did they break down. When the moment of parting arrived, Virginie shed a few tears, but her words were brave.

'God bless thee, my Etienne!' she said; 'thou knowest I will pray for thee, and thou wilt be far better with the army than with us. For I have seen thee these last weeks, and I have known how miserable thou hast been.'

'Adieu, Célimène!' cried La Beauce; 'thou must aid Virginie to watch over the boy. Come here, my son. Be thou a brave boy and listen to all thy mother says to thee,' and he embraced his son.

'Thou wilt be a great general when thou returnest,' said the boy. When he returned. Who could tell if he would return? But he kissed his wife once more, and leaping on his horse rode rapidly off.

The little family, under the charge of Jacques Le Blanc, drove out to the Champs de Mars to see the brave squadron set out for the war. The two women, even then, managed to suppress their emotion before the departing hero. Who has not seen such separations and partings? Who has not watched the pale face and tightly compressed lips of the mother or wife who bids adieu to him she loves? Who cannot feel for them? Let the trumpets bray out their loudest! Drown the sobs of the women. On, brave men. By the right forward! and they rattle on—whither? God only knows! The prayers of those they leave behind go with them.

The squadron the Comte de la Beauce led was a rough-looking lot to the eye of the accomplished soldier. They had little of the glitter and splendour of royal troops. But they were strong, stern men, hardened by toil, and fired with the love of country, fit men to be formed into the conquerors of Europe under a lucky commander. Among them rode one gaunt, hard-featured private, who as they passed Virginie and her family glanced at them with glistening eye. So selfish is love, that Virginie, full of her husband, would not have seen him, had not the quick eye of the child recognised his old playmate. 'See!' he cried, 'see dear Jean!' and he waved his little cap to his friend. Virginie blushed at her forgetfulness, and waved her hand too, and Célimène kissed her dainty fingers to the rough soldier. '*Camarade*,' said the soldier next to him, 'thou hast a *bonne fortune*; *diable!* they are both handsome women.' '*Chut!*' cried the corporal, 'they are Madame la Capitaine and her sister.' Jean answered not, but he fixed his eye on his captain and determined to earn the thanks of her he idolised.

So these two rode forth to the war.

(To be continued.)

The Art and Mystery of Collaboration.

IT may be said that curiosity is the only useful vice, since without it there would be neither discovery nor invention and curiosity it is which lends interest to many a book written in collaboration, the reader being less concerned about the merits of the work than he is with guessing at the respective shares of the associated authors. To many of us a novel by two writers is merely a puzzle, and we seek to solve the enigma of its double authorship, accepting it as a nut to crack even when the kernel is little likely to be more digestible than the shell. Before a play of Beaumont and Fletcher or a novel of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian not a few find themselves asking a double question. First, 'what was the part of each partner in the writing of the book?' And, second, 'how is it possible for two men to be concerned in the making of one work?'

The answer to the first question can hardly ever be given; even the collaborators themselves are at a loss to specify their own contributions. When two men have worked together honestly and heartily in the inventing, the developing, the constructing, the writing, and the revising of a book or a play, it is often impossible for either partner to pick out his own share; certain things he may recognise as his own, and certain other things he may credit frankly to his ally; but the rest was the result of the collaboration itself, contributed by both parties together and not by either separately. To explain this more in detail calls for an answer to the second question, and requires a careful consideration of the principle of collaboration, and a tentative explanation of the manner in which two men may write one book.

I confine myself to a discussion of literary partnerships, because in literature collaboration is more complete, more intimate than it is in the other arts. When an architect aids a sculptor, when Mr. Stamford White, for instance, plans the mounting of the 'Lincoln' or the 'Farragut' of Mr. Saint Gaudens, the respective

shares of each artist may be determined with precision. So it is also when we find Rubens painting the figures in a landscape of Snyders. Nor are we under any doubt as to the contribution of each collaborator when we hear an operetta by Mr. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan; we know that one wrote the words and the other the music, and the division of labour does not seem unnatural, although it is not necessary; Wagner, for example, composed the score to his own book. But no one is puzzled by the White-Saint-Gaudens combination, the Rubens-Snyders, or the Gilbert and Sullivan, as most of us are, for example, by the alliance of Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins in the writing of *No Thoroughfare*.

If the doubt is great before a novelette composed by two authors of individualities as distinct as those of Dickens and of Collins, how much greater may it be before books written by more than two partners. Not long ago, four clever American story-tellers co-operated in writing a satirical tale, *The King's Men*; and years before four brilliant French writers, Mme. de Girardin, Gautier, Sandeau and Méry, had set them the example by composing that epistolary romance *La Croix de Berny*. There is an English story in six chapters by six authors, among whom were the younger Hood, the late T. W. Robertson, and Mr. W. S. Gilbert; and there is an American story happily entitled, *Six of One, by Half-a-dozen of the Other*—Mrs. Stowe being among the half-dozen.

Six authors for a single story, or even four, may seem to some a woeful waste of effort, and so, no doubt, it is; but I have found recorded cases of more extravagant prodigality. In France, an association of three or four in the authorship of a farce is not at all uncommon; and it is there that collaboration has been carried to its most absurd extreme. M. Jules Goizet, in his curious *Histoire Anecdotique de la Collaboration au Théâtre* (Paris, 1867), mentions a one-act play which was performed in Paris in 1811, and which was the work of twenty-four dramatists; and he records the production in 1834, and also in Paris, of another one-act play, which was prepared for a benefit of the Dramatic Authors' Society, and which had no fewer than thirty-six authors. This suggests an intellectual poverty as barren as that once satirised by Chamfort in Prussia, when, after he had said a good thing, he saw the others talking it over at the end of the table; 'See those Germans,' he cried, 'clubbing together to take a joke.'

For the most part these combination ventures are mere curiosities of literature. Nothing of real value is likely to be manufactured by a joint stock company of unlimited authorship. The literary partnerships whose paper sells on 'Change at par have but two members. It is this association of two, and of two only, to which we refer generally when we speak of collaboration. In fact, literary collaboration might be defined, fairly enough, as 'the union of two writers for the production of one book.' This is, of a truth, the only collaboration worthy of serious criticism, the only one really pregnant and vital.

Like any other partnership, a collaboration is unsatisfactory and unsuccessful unless it is founded on mutual esteem. The partners must have sympathy for each other, and respect. Each must be tolerant of the other's opinions. Each must be ready to yield a point when need be. In all associations there must be concessions from one to the other. These are the negative qualities of a good collaborator; and chief among the positive necessities is the willingness of each to do his full share of the work. A French wit has declared that the happiest marriages are those in which one is loved and the other lets himself (or herself) be loved. Collaboration is a sort of marriage, but the witticism does not here hold true, although Mr. Andrew Lang recently declared that in most collaborations one man did all the work while the other man looked on. No doubt this happens now and again, but a partnership of this kind is not likely to last long. Mr. Lang has also quoted from the *Souvenirs Dramatiques* of the elder Dumas an opinion of that most delightful of romancers, to the effect that when two men are at work together 'one is always the dupe, and he is the man of talent.'

It is pleasant to be able to controvert the testimony of the great Dumas by the exhibits in his own case. Of all the mighty mass of Dumas's work, what survives now, a score of years after his death, and what bids fair to survive at least three score and ten years longer, are two or three cycles of brilliant and exciting narratives: *Monte Cristo*, the *Three Musketeers*, with its sequels, the stories of which Chicot is the hero; and of these every one was written in collaboration with M. Auguste Maquet.

Scribe is perhaps the only contemporary author who rivalled Dumas in fecundity and in popularity; and Scribe's evidence contradicts Dumas's, although both were persistent collaborators. Of all the hundred of Scribe's plays, scarce half-a-dozen were written by him unaided. When he collected his writings into a

uniform edition, he dedicated this to his many collaborators; and he declared that while the few works he had composed alone were hard labour, those which he had done in partnership were a pleasure. And we know from M. Legouv  , one of Scribe's associates, that Scribe generally preferred to do all the mere writing himself. The late Eug  ne Labiche, almost as prolific a playwright as Scribe and quite as popular, did nothing except with a partner; and he, so we are told by M. Augier, who once composed a comedy with him, also liked to do all the actual writing.

In a genuine collaboration, when the joint work is a true chemical union and not a mere mechanical mixture, it matters little who holds the pen. The main advantage of a literary partnership is in the thorough discussion of the central idea and of its presentation in every possible aspect. Art and genius, so Voltaire asserted, consist in finding all that is in one's subject, and in not seeking outside of it. When a situation has been talked over thoroughly and traced out to its logical conclusion, and when a character has been considered from every angle and developed to its inevitable end, nine-tenths of the task is accomplished. The putting down on paper of the situation and the character is but the clothing of a babe already alive and kicking.

Perhaps the unity of impression which we get from some books written in partnership is due to the fact that the writing was always the work of the same partner. Scribe, for example, was not an author of salient individuality, but the plays which bear his name are unmistakably his handiwork. Labiche also, like Scribe, was ready to collaborate with anybody and everybody; but his trade-mark is woven into the texture of every play that bears his name. It is understood that the tales of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian are written out by M. Erckmann and revised by M. Chatrian. I have heard, on what authority I cannot say, that of the long series of stories bearing the name of Besant and Rice, all that the late James Rice actually wrote with his own pen was the first chapter or two of their first book, *Ready Money Mortiboy*. This assertion, whether well founded or not, gains colour of truth from the striking similarity of style, not to call it identity, of the Besant and Rice novels with the novels of the surviving member of the partnership. Yet, if one may judge by the preface he has prefixed to the library edition of *Ready Money Mortiboy*, Mr. Besant would be the last one to deny that Mr. Rice was a full partner in the firm, bearing an equal share in the burden and heat of the day. Comparing the novels of dual

authorship with those of the survivor alone, it is perhaps possible to ascribe to Mr. Rice a fancy for foreign characters and a faculty of rendering them vigorously, a curious scent for actual oddity, a bolder handling than Mr. Besant's, and a stronger fondness for dramatic incident, not to say melodramatic. The joint novels have a certain kinship to the virile tales of Charles Reade; but little trace of this family likeness is to be found in the later works of Mr. Besant alone, whose manner is gentler and more caressing, with a more delicate humour and a subtler flavour of irony.

But any endeavour to sift out the contribution of one collaborator from that of his fellow is futile—if the union has been a true marriage. It leads to the splitting of hairs and to the building of more than one hypothesis on the point of a single needle—surely as idle a task as any ever attempted by a Shaksperian commentator. I doubt, indeed, if this effort 'to go behind the returns'—to use an Americanism as expressive as an Americanism ought to be—is even permissible, except possibly after the partnership is dissolved. Under the most favourable circumstances the inquiry is little likely to be profitable. Who shall declare whether the father or the mother is the real parent of a child?

It is interesting, no doubt, and often instructive to note the influence of two authors on each other; to consider the effect of the combination of their diverse talents and temperaments; to discover how the genius of one conflicts with that of the other or complements it; to observe how at one point the strength of A reinforces the weakness of B, and how at another point the finer taste of B adroitly curbs the more exuberant energy of A; and to remark how the conjunction of two men of like minds and of equally ardent convictions sometimes will result in a work harsher and more strenuous than either would produce alone.

For curious investigation of this sort there is no lack of material, since collaboration has been attractive to not a few of the foremost figures in the history of literature. The list includes not only Beaumont and Fletcher among the mighty Elizabethans, but Shakspeare and almost every one of his fellow dramatists—not only Corneille, Molière and Racine, but almost every other notable name in the history of the French theatre. Cervantes and Calderon and Lope de Vega took partners in Spain; and in Germany Schiller and Goethe worked together. In Great Britain Addison and Steele united in the *Spectator*, and in the

United States Irving and Paulding combined in *Salmagundi*, as did Drake and Halleck in the *Croakers*.

The list might be extended almost indefinitely, but it is long enough to allow of one observation—an observation sufficiently obvious. It is that no great poem has ever been written by two men together, nor any really great novel. Collaboration has served the cause of periodical literature. But it has been most frequent and most fertile among dramatists. We ask why this is—and the answer is ready. It is because a play calls primarily for forethought, ingenuity, construction and compression, in the attaining of which two heads are indubitably better than one. And here we are nigh to laying hold on the root of the matter. Here we have ready to hand what may help toward a definition of the possibilities and of the limitations of literary partnership.

Collaboration fails to satisfy when there is need of profound meditation, of solemn self-interrogation, or of lofty imagination lifting itself freely toward the twin-peaks of Parnassus. Where there may be a joy in the power of unexpected expansion, and where there may be a charm of veiled beauty, vague and fleeting, visible at a glimpse only and intangible always, two men would be each in the other's way. In the effort to fix these fugitive graces they would but trip over each other's heels. A task of this delicacy belongs of right to the lonely student in the silent watches of the night, or in solitary walks under the greenwood tree and far from the madding crowd.

Collaboration succeeds most abundantly where clearness is needed, where precision, skill, and logic are looked for, where we expect simplicity of motive, sharpness of outline, ingenuity of construction and cleverness of effect. Collaboration may be a potent coadjutor wherever technic is a pleasure for its own sake:—and the sense of art is dull in a time or in a place which does not delight in sound workmanship and in the adroit devices of a loving craftsman. Perhaps, indeed, collaboration may tend—or, at least, it may be tempted now and again—to sacrifice matter to manner. Those enamoured of technic may consider rather the excellence of the form than the value of the fact upon which their art is to be exercised. Yet it may be doubted whether there is any real danger to literature in a craving for the utmost technical skill.

In much of Byron's work Matthew Arnold found 'neither deliberate scientific construction, nor yet the instinctive artistic creation of poetic wholes.' Accidental excellence, an intuitive

attaining of the ideal, the instinctive artistic creation of poetic wholes, is not to be expected from a partnership—indeed, is hardly possible to it. But a partnership is likely to attempt deliberate scientific construction owing to the mutual criticism of the joint authors; and by collaboration the principles of scientific construction are conveyed from one to another to the advancement of the art itself and to the unmistakable improvement of the mere journeyman work of the average man of letters. For example, many even of the best English novels seem formless when compared with the masterly structure of any good French story; and perhaps the habit of collaboration which obtains in France is partly to be praised for this.

All things have the defect of their qualities as well as the quality of their defects. Collaboration may be considered as a labour-saving device; and, like other labour-saving devices, it sometimes results in a loss of individuality. One is inclined to suspect a lack of spontaneity in the works which two authors have written together, and in which we are likely to find polish, finish, and perfection of mechanism. To call the result of collaboration often over-laboured, or to condemn it as cut-and-dried, would be to express with unduly brutal frankness the criticism it is best merely to suggest. By the very fact of a partnership with its talking over, its searching discussion, its untiring pursuit of the idea into the most remote fastnesses, there may be an over-sharpness of outline, a deprivation of that vagueness of contour not seldom strangely fascinating.

No doubt in the work of two men there is a loss of the unexpected, and the story must of necessity move straight forward by the shortest road, not lingering by the wayside in hope of wind-falls. There is less chance of unforeseen developments suggesting themselves as the pen speeds on its way across the paper—and every writer knows how the pen often runs away with him 'across country' and over many a five-barred gate which he had never intended to take: but as there is less chance of the unforeseen, so is there also less chance that the unforeseen will be worth having. Above all is there far less likelihood of the writer's suddenly finding himself up a blind-alley with a sign of No Thoroughfare staring him in the face. It has been objected that in books prepared in partnership even the writing is hard and arid, as though each writer were working on a foreign suggestion and lacking the freedom with which a man may treat his own invention. If a writer feels thus, the partnership is unprofitable

and unnatural, and he had best get a divorce as soon as may be. In a genuine collaboration each of the parties thereto ought to have so far contributed to the story that he can consider every incident to be his, and his the whole work when it is completed.

As it happens there is one department of literature in which the defect of collaboration almost becomes a quality. For a drama deliberate scientific construction is absolutely essential. In play-making an author must know the last word before he sets down the first. From the rigid limitations of time and space there is no room on the stage for unexpected development. Voltaire tells us that there were misers before the invention of money; and no doubt there were literary partnerships before the first playhouse was built. But the value of collaboration to the playwright has been instinctively recognised whenever and wherever the theatre has flourished most abundantly; and as soon as the dramas of a country are of domestic manufacture, and cease to be mainly imported from abroad, the playmakers take to collaboration intuitively.

In Spain, when Lope de Vega and Calderon and Cervantes were writing for the stage, they had partners and pupils. In England there was scarce one of all the marvellous company of the Elizabethan dramatists who did not join hands in the making of plays. Fletcher, for example, wrote with Massinger even while Beaumont was alive. Chapman had for associates Marston, and Shirley, and Ben Jonson. Dekker worked in partnership with Ford, Webster, Massinger, and Middleton; while Middleton combined with Dekker, Fletcher, Rowley, and Ben Jonson.

In France, a country where the true principles of the play-maker's art are most thoroughly understood, Rotrou and Corneille worked together with three others on five-act tragedies barely outlined by Cardinal Richelieu. Corneille and Quinault aided Molière in the writing of *Psyché*. Boileau and La Fontaine and other friends helped Racine to complete the *Plaideurs*. In the present century, when the supremacy of the French drama is again indisputable, many of the best plays are due to collaboration. Scribe and M. Legouv   wrote together *Adrienne Lecouvreur* and the *Bataille des Dames*. MM. Meilhac and Hal  vy were joint authors of *Frou-frou* (that poignant picture of the disadvantages of self-sacrifice) and of the *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* (that bold and brilliant satire of imperial misrule). Emile Augier, to my mind the most wholesome and the most manly dramatist of our day, joined Jules Sandeau in composing the *Gendre de M. Poirier*, the strongest comedy of the century.

Scribe and Augier and Sandeau, M. Legouv  , M. Meilhac and M. Hal  vy, are all men of fine talents and of varied accomplishments in letters; they are individually the authors of many another drama; but no one of these other pieces attains the stature of the co-operative plays or even approaches the standard thus set. Nothing else of Scribe's is as human and as pathetic as *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, and nothing else of M. Legouv  's is as skilful. Since the dissolution of the partnership of MM. Meilhac and Hal  vy they have each written alone; M. Hal  vy's *Abb   Constantin* is a charming idyll, and M. Meilhac's *D  cor  * is delicately humorous; but where is the underlying strength which sustains *Frou-frou*? where is the exuberant comic force of *Tricoche et Cacolet*? where is the disintegrating irony of the *Belle H  l  ne*? Here collaboration has proved itself. Here union has produced work finer and higher than was apparently possible to either author alone. More often than not collaboration seems accidental, and its results are not the works by which we rank either of its writers. We do not think of Charles Dickens chiefly as the author of *No Thoroughfare*, nor is *No Thoroughfare* the book by which we judge Wilkie Collins. But *Adrienne Lecouvreur* is the finest play on the list of either Scribe's works or of M. Legouv  's, and *Frou-frou* is the one comedy of MM. Meilhac and Hal  vy likely to survive.

France is the country with the most vigorous dramatic literature, and France is the country where collaboration is the most frequent. The two facts are to be set down together, without a forced suggestion that either is a consequence of the other. But it is to be noted again that in any country where there is a revival of the drama collaboration is likely to become common at once. In Germany just now, for example, there is a promising school of comedy writers—and they are combining one with another. In Great Britain and in the United States there are signs of dramatic growth; and very obviously there has been an enormous improvement in the past few years. A comparison of the original plays written in our language twenty-five years ago with those now so written is most encouraging. It may seem a little like that circular argument—which is as dangerous as a circular saw—but it seems to me that one of the causes of immediate hopefulness for the drama in our language is the prevalence of collaboration in England and in America—for by such partnerships the principles of play-making are spread abroad. 'We learn of our contemporaries,' said Emerson, 'what they know,

without effort, and almost through the pores of the skin.' Now, a collaborator must needs be the closest of contemporaries.

With Charles Reade, Tom Taylor composed *Masks and Faces*, an artificial comedy of undeniable effect; and with Mr. A. W. Dubourg he wrote *New Men and Old Acres*, a comedy also artificial, but more closely akin to modern life. With Palgrave Simpson, Mr. Herman Merivale prepared a moving romantic drama, *All for Her*, and with Mr. F. C. Grove he wrote a brilliant comedy, *Forget-Me-Not*. To collaboration again is due the *Silver King*, the best of recent English dramas. And collaboration, alas! is also to be credited with the most of the latest machine-made British melodramas, plays which may bear the signatures of any two of half-a-dozen contemporary playwrights—which reveal a most extraordinary likeness, one to the other, as though they had each been cut from the same roll of goods in lengths to suit the purchaser—and in which the pattern is always a variation of a single theme, the revengeful pursuit of an exemplary good man by an indefatigable bad man.

In America there is also an evident tendency toward co-operation, as there has been a distinct improvement in the technic of play-writing. Mr. Bronson Howard has told us that he had a silent partner in revising his *Banker's Daughter*, known in England as the *Old Love and the New*. To the novice in the theatre the aid of the expert is invaluable. When Mrs. Hodgson Burnett desired to make a play out of her little tale of 'Esmeralda,' she consulted counsel learned in the law of dramatic construction, Mr. William Gillette, by whose aid the comedy of *Young Folk's Ways* was written. If the poetic drama has any future on our stage, it must owe this in a measure to collaboration, for the technic of the theatre is nowadays very elaborate, and few bards are likely to master it satisfactorily. But if the poet will frankly join hands with the practical playwright, there is a hopeful possibility of success. Had Browning taken advice before he finally fixed on his action, and while the form was yet fluid, *A Blot in the Scutcheon* might have been made a great acting play. It is while a drama is still malleable that the aid of the expert is invaluable.

The assistance which Dumas received from his frequent associates was not of this kind; it was not the co-operation of an expert partner but rather that of a useful apprentice. The chief of these collaborators was the late Auguste Maquet, with whom Dumas would block out the plot, and to whom he would entrust

all the toilsome detail of investigation and verification. Edmond About once caught Dumas red-handed in the very act of collaboration, and from his account it appears that Maquet had set down in black and white the outline of the story as they had developed it together, incorporating, doubtless, his own suggestions and the result of his historic research. This outline was contained on little squares of paper, and each of these little squares Dumas was amplifying into a large sheet of manuscript in his own fine handwriting.

Thackeray answered the accusation that Dumas did not write all his own works by asking, 'Does not the chief cook have *aides* under him? Did not Rubens' pupils paint on his canvases?' Then—it is in one of the most delightful passages of the always delightful 'Roundabout Papers'—he declares that he himself would like a competent, respectable, and rapid clerk, to whom he might say, 'Mr. Jones, if you please, the Archbishop must die this morning in about five pages. Turn to article "Dropsy" (or what you will) in Encyclopædia. Take care there are no medical blunders in his death. Group his daughters, physicians, and chaplains round him. In Wales's "London," letter B, third shelf, you will find an account of Lambeth, and some prints of the place. Colour in with local colouring. The daughter will come down and speak to her lover in his wherry at Lambeth Stairs.' 'Jones (an intelligent young man) examines the medical, historical, topographical books necessary; his chief points out to him in Jeremy Taylor (fol. London, MDCLV.) a few remarks, such as might befit a dear old archbishop departing this life. When I come back to dress for dinner the archbishop is dead on my table in five pages; medicine, topography, theology, all right, and Jones has gone home to his family some hours.' This was Thackeray's whimsical suggestion; but if he had ventured to adopt it himself, I fear we should have been able to distinguish the 'prentice hand from the fine round sweep of the master.

This paper is, perhaps, rather a consideration of the principle of collaboration than an explanation of its methods. To point out the departments of literature in which collaboration may be of advantage and to indicate its more apparent limitations have been my objects, and I have postponed as long as I could any attempt to explain 'how it is done.' Such an explanation is at best but a doubtful possibility.

Perhaps the first requisite is a sympathy between the two partners not sufficient to make them survey life from the same point of view, but yet enough to make them respect each other's

suggestions and be prepared to accept them. There is needed in both openness of mind as well as alertness, an ability to take as well as to give, a willingness to put yourself in his place and to look at the world from his standpoint. Probably it is best that the two authors shall not be too much alike in temperament. Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, for example, although not twins, thought alike on most subjects; and so close was their identity of cerebration that, when they were sitting at the same table at work on the same book, they sometimes wrote almost the same sentence at the same moment. This is collaboration carried to an abnormal and unwholesome extreme; and there is much that is morbid and much that is forced in the books the Goncourts composed together.

Collaboration may once more be likened to matrimony, and we may consider MM. Erckmann-Chatrian and Messrs. Besant and Rice as monogamists, while Scribe and Labiche, who were ready to collaborate at large, are polygamists. In marriage husband and wife are one, and that is not a happy union when either inquires as to which one it is: the unity should be so complete that the will of each is merged in that of the other. So it should be in a literary partnership. Respect for each other, mutual esteem, is, perhaps, the first requisite for collaboration as for matrimony; and good temper is assuredly the second.

In discussing the practice of collaboration with that past master of the art Mr. Walter Besant, he declared to me that it was absolutely essential that one of the two partners should be the head of the firm. He did not tell me who was the head of the firm of Besant and Rice, and I have no direct testimony to offer in support of my belief that the dominant member was Mr. Besant himself; but there is a plenty of circumstantial evidence to that effect, and, as Thoreau says, 'some circumstantial evidence is very strong—as when you find a trout in the milk.'

What Mr. Besant meant, I take it, was that there must be a unity of impulse so that the resulting product shall seem the outcome of a single controlling mind. This may be attained by the domination of one partner, no doubt, as when Dumas availed himself of the aid of Maquet; but it can be the result also of an harmonious equality, as when M. Meilhac and M. Halévy were writing together. In collaboration as in matrimony, again, it is well when the influence of the masculine element does not wholly overpower the feminine.

As there are households where husband and wife fight like cat and dog, and where marriage ends in divorce, so there are

literary partnerships which are dissolved in acrimony and anger. M. Alexandre Dumas *filz* has lent his strength to the authors of the *Supplice d'une Femme*, *Héloïse Parquet*, and the *Danichefs*, and there followed bad feelings and high words. Warned by this bitter experience, M. Dumas is said to have answered a request to collaborate with the query, 'Why should I wish to quarrel with you?' But M. Dumas is a bad collaborator, I fancy, despite his skill and his strength. He is like the powerful ally a weak country sometimes calls in to its own undoing. Yet in his case the usual cause of disagreement between collaborators is lacking, for the plays he has recast and stamped with his own image and superscription have succeeded. Now in general it is when the work fails that the collaborators fall out. Racine made an epigram against the two now forgotten authors of a now forgotten tragedy, that each claimed it before it was produced, and both renounced it after it had been acted. The quarrels of collaborators, like the quarrels of any author, or, for that matter, like any quarrels at all, to which the public are admitted are the height of folly. The world looks on at the fight, and listens while the two former friends call each other hard names; and more often than not it believes what each says of the other, and not what he says of himself.

If I may be allowed to offer myself as a witness, I shall testify to the advantage of a literary partnership, which halves the labour of the task and doubles the pleasure. It may be that I have been exceptionally skilful in choosing my allies or exceptionally fortunate in them, but I can declare unhesitatingly that I have never had a hard word with a collaborator while our work was in hand, and never a bitter word with him afterward. My collaborators have always been my friends before and they have always remained my friends after. Sometimes our literary partnership was the unpremeditated outcome of a friendly chat, in the course of which we chanced upon a subject, and in sport developed it until unexpectedly it seemed promising enough to be worthy of artistic consideration. Such a subject belonged to both of us, and had best be treated by both together. There was no dispute as to our respective shares in the result of our joint labours, because we could not ourselves even guess what each had done when both had been at work together. As Angier said in the preface to the '*Lionnes Pauvres*,' which he wrote with M. Edouard Foussier, we must copy 'the married people who say one to the other, "your son."'

I have collaborated in writing stories, in making plays, and in

editing books. Sometimes I may have thought that I did more than my share, sometimes I knew that I did less than I should, but always there was harmony, and never did either of us seek to assert a mastery. However done, and by whichever of the two, the subject was always thoroughly discussed between us; it was turned over and over and upside down and inside out; it was considered from all possible points of view and in every stage of development. When a final choice was made of what seemed to us best, the mere putting on paper was wholly secondary. I have written a play of which I prepared the dialogue of one act and my associate prepared that of the next; I have written a play in which I wrote the scenes in which certain characters appeared and my ally wrote those in which certain other characters appeared; I have written a short story in two chapters of which one was in my autograph and the other in my partner's; but none the less was he the half-author of the portions I set on paper, and none the less was I the half-author of the portions he set on paper.

Probably, the most profitable method is that of alternate development—certainly it is for a drama. After the subject begins to take form, A makes out a tentative sequence of scenes; and this, after several talks, B fills up into an outline of the story. Slowly, and after careful consultation, A elaborates this into a detailed scenario in which every character is set forth, every entrance and every exit, with the reasons for them, every scene and every effect—in fact, everything except the words to be spoken. Then B takes this scenario, and from it he writes a first rough draft of the play itself, complete in dialogue and in ‘business.’ This rough draft A revises, and re-writes where need be. Then it goes to the copyist; and when the clean type-written manuscript returns both A and B go over it again and again, pointing and polishing, until each is satisfied with their labour in common. Perhaps the drama is the only form of literature in which so painstaking a process would be advantageous, or in which it would be advisable even; but of a play the structure can hardly be too careful or too precise, nor can the dialogue be too compact or too polished.

‘I am no pickpurse of another’s wit,’ as Sir Philip Sydney boasts, but I cannot forego the malign pleasure of quoting, in conclusion, Mr. Andrew Lang’s insidious suggestion to ‘young men entering on the life of letters.’ He advises them ‘to find an ingenious, and industrious, and successful partner; stick to him, never quarrel with him, and do not survive him.’

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

The Spring Thrush.

Jam satis terris nivis atque dirae
Grandinis misit Pater.

BROWN bird that swingest on the windy spray,
Pouring sweet music forth with silver voice,
When first the morning wakes the grey-robed day
Thou biddest every budding copse rejoice.
Charmed into being by thy ringing note,
The golden crocus lifts her shining eye,
And round the edges of the reedy moat
The fair pale primrose, faltering yet and shy,
Reflects the earliest light that floods the eastern sky.

With such a voice as thine, in olden days,
The Cyprian queen awakened from his sleep
Her love Adonis; when the greening haze
Of opening buds across the elm 'gan creep,
And crimson tinged the tender larch-tree cone,
And all along each wood the hazel threw
Gold-dust from dancing tassels random blown,
And the fair maiden earth, as Danae knew
The kindly Jove descend from out the opening blue.

How swift from silent couch then raised his head
Bright young Adonis, monarch of the Spring,
Roused from his weary sleep among the dead
In those still caves, where never bird doth sing.
What joy to feel the fresh sweet upper air,
Thick-fraught with honeyed whispers of his love,
Touch the soft cheek, and fan the waving hair,
And bring from earth the crooning of the dove
And song of all the birds from some new-wakened grove!

Dear speckled songster, what although the years
Long since have slain the simpler race of men
Who heard in that dim past with clearer ears
Thy music singing down the rocky glen,
And feigned sweet fables there of nymph and swain,
And Gods descended to the happy world?
To us that hear thy voice restores again
The golden time, and sees the mist-wreaths furl'd,
That years of sadder days 'twixt them and us have curl'd.

Sing on, fair bird, like that sweet angel shape
Whose heart-strings are a lute, and let thy song
Well up from every glade and purple cape,
One pure fount springing from a world of wrong.
Rouse Spring, and all his wealth of sun and shower,
And wavelets whispering up the yellow sand;
Bid from his footprints every shining flower
Arise to star with blooms this northern strand
Till winter's fetters fall from off the loosened land.

S. CORNISH WATKINS.

A Substitute.

THE STORY OF MY LAST CRICKET-MATCH.

I.

I HAVE some idea of cricket—not much, perhaps, but I certainly have some. I was not in the 'Varsity team, nor near it; but I played in the Freshman's match, and provided myself with spectacles. I was nearly in the school team once. That was when I carried my bat for forty-five. I must own that my performance was a surprise to everyone—and to myself among the rest. But as I never repeated it—or anything like it—they left me, very wisely, out of the eleven.

Thus it will be seen that, from a cricketing point of view, I did not, even in my best days, come up to first-rate form; and my best days were, reckoning from last summer, quite fifteen years ago. During those fifteen years I do not remember once handling a bat, far less hitting at a cricket-ball with one; and yet, in this state of unpreparedness, I had the presumption last summer to captain a team, and to lead them on—well, not to victory but to disgrace. It's a fact. The match was Storwell *v.* Latchmere. Storwell was *my* team; and as I do not think a more remarkable match was ever known in the whole annals of cricketing history, I here venture to report it.

When they first asked me to play I thought they were mad. Storwell-on-Sea is a village on the south coast—I beg pardon; I believe it is called by the inhabitants a town. It is a pretty place, and not unknown—in the locality. It has a season and all that kind of thing, and it was during the season I was there. And one day a deputation of the inhabitants called on me at my lodgings to ask if I would lead the local cricket club to, say, victory. As I have said, my first impression was that they were mad; either that, or else that they were 'playing it off' on the unprotected stranger.

I hinted so much to the deputation. The deputation smiled. The chief spokesman was the local barber; his name was Sapsworth. He explained that Mr. Wingrave had sent them there. Wingrave was the vicar; we were 'up' together, and he must have known quite well whereabouts my cricketing form came in. I decided to crush the deputation before the thing went farther.

'To show you the sort of man you propose should captain you, I need only mention that it is more than fifteen years since I had a bat in my hand.'

But the admission did not crush them: quite the other way. It opened the floodgates of their eloquence.

'That's nothing,' Mr. Sapsworth cried. 'There's Hedges here; we've had to put him in; he don't even know the rules of the game, and he's just turned sixty-one.'

I glanced at Mr. Hedges, thus frankly referred to. He was a smiling, red-faced, bald-headed old gentleman, who, if not considerable in height, was great in girth. He would certainly have turned the scale at sixteen stone. I felt that, to cricketers who intended to play Mr. Hedges, any objections which I might urge would appear quite trivial.

'When is the match to be?' I asked.

'To-morrow,' was the startling reply.

I was speechless. That I, after fifteen years' total abstention, should be asked to captain a team the members of which were entire strangers to me, and of whose individual styles of play I had not the faintest notion, in a match against an unknown foe, at four-and-twenty hours' notice, *was* a little hard to credit. It was altogether too preposterous. I told them so. But they could not be brought to see it.

The end of it was that I agreed to play. No man knows to what a depth of folly he can sink until he tries.

II.

THE match was to be played on Mr. Stubbs's field. Mr. Stubbs was a local butcher. Mr. Sapsworth had kindly promised to come and escort me to the scene of action. He arrived at half-past nine, just as I was opening my morning's letters. On the way he gave me a chart of the country. It appeared that in batting we were not strong, in fielding we were weak, and that our bowling was more than shaky.

'But we shall pull through,' Mr. Sapsworth added; 'especially now,' and he glanced at me.

'I hope you are under no delusion as to my powers, Mr. Sapsworth. I never was a first-rate cricketer, and, as I have already told you, it is more than fifteen years since I handled a bat.'

'If you'll excuse my saying so, sir, I've generally noticed that them who doesn't say much does a deal.'

That was one way of looking at it, no doubt; but if I did a deal, I could only say that it would be a pleasant surprise to me.

'And our opponents—what sort of a team are they?'

Mr. Sapsworth turned up his nose—not metaphorically, but as a matter of fact.

'If we're bad,' he said, 'they're wuss. There's only one thing I've ever seen those Latchmere blokes much good at, and that is cheating. You'll have to keep a sharp eye on them, or they'll have all our chaps out when they ain't; and they won't go out themselves, not even when you've bowled their three stumps down all of a row.'

'Surely,' I suggested, 'those sort of questions are for the umpires to decide.'

'Umpires!' Up went Mr. Sapsworth's nose again. 'They bring their own umpire, and he's got his own ideas of umpiring, he has. But we've got our own umpire as well as them.'

I said nothing; but Mr. Sapsworth's words conveyed to my mind pleasant impressions of the strict rigour of the game.

When we arrived there was a goodly gathering already assembled in Mr. Stubbs's field. A tent was erected; in and about it was a nondescript collection of men and boys; some forty or fifty others, availing themselves of the opportunity afforded them for a little practice, were actually disporting themselves on the pitch on which we were presently to play. I consoled myself with the reflection that the worse the ground was the more *my* bowling would tell.

Mr. Sapsworth introduced me to the crowd *en masse*. Several persons touched their caps to me; others nodded their head; some grinned.

'Good morning, gentlemen. We're going to have a fine day for our match. Our team all here?'

Mr. Sapsworth took upon himself to answer; he had been searching about him with his eyes.

'They're here all right. I suppose those Latchmere chaps ain't come yet?'

They had not come, and they did not come for an hour or more. I employed the interval in becoming acquainted with the individual members, arranging the order of going in, and their positions in the field; matters in appearance simple enough, but more difficult in practice. But at last the preliminaries were settled somehow, and the Latchmere men appeared upon the ground.

Their captain, coming up, was introduced to me. I was informed afterwards that he was a blacksmith. I thought he was by the way in which he grasped my hand. His opening speech was a little surprising.

'We ain't going to play you if you've got eleven men, you know.'

I inquired into his meaning.

'We've only got ten,' he said. 'And one of them's Soft Sawney, and another's Sprouts.'

I do not know if those were the correct names of the gentlemen referred to, or only fancy ones by which they were known to their friends; but he laid his hand on two of his followers and hauled them to the front. One was a long, weedy youth, who, one saw at a glance, was more than half an imbecile; and the other was a portly old gentleman of fifty-five or six, with a corporation like a barrel.

Mr. Sapsworth intervened.

'What's that!' he cried. 'We've got Hedges!'

He brought Mr. Hedges forward. I could not but feel that, to say the least of it, Mr. Hedges balanced Mr. Sprouts. If Mr. Hedges could run more than a dozen yards without pausing to take breath, I was almost ready to express my willingness to eat my hat.

'But we've only got ten men,' persisted Mr. Barker. 'You'll only have to have ten. If you think we're going to play against your eleven we won't play you at all, so that's all about it.'

There was a prospect of unpleasantness even before the match began. It seemed that one of us would have to retire, in satisfaction of Mr. Barker's rather unjustifiable demand. I was about to retire myself—for I instinctively felt that, as a captain, I was no match for Mr. Barker—when a rather curious incident occurred.

On a sudden a newcomer appeared upon the scene. I say on a sudden, for no one had noticed his approach, and yet, all at once, there he was, standing between the Latchmere captain and myself. To me at any rate his presence was so unexpected, and,

indeed, so startling, that I stared. He seemed to have come out of space. He was a big, burly fellow, with smooth cheeks, round face, bullet-shaped head, and sleepy-looking black eyes.

‘Let me play for you?’ he said.

For a moment Mr. Barker stared at the stranger in surprise, in common with the rest of us. Then he jumped at the offer.

‘Let you! rather!’ He thrust out his hand and caught the stranger’s palm in his. But no sooner had he got it firmly gripped than he dropped it with an exclamation: ‘Why, what’s the matter with you? Ain’t you well? Your hand’s as cold as a frozen corpse.’

I went a little aside with Mr. Sapsworth.

‘Who is he?’ I asked.

‘I don’t know, and yet I seem somehow to have seen his face before. But let them have him. He doesn’t look as though he were up to much.’

He did not. Anyone looking less like a cricketer I have seldom seen. His costume was ridiculous. He had on a pair of large check trousers—a check of the kind which the Oxford tailor explained to the undergraduate was a *leetle* too large to be seen to advantage on a single pair of understandings. He had on a huge top hat, of a size and shape which would have made the fortune of a ‘lion comique.’ A red woollen muffler was wound several times round his neck, and his capacious person was enveloped in an enormous overcoat, the like of which I had never seen before. The day promised to remind us of the torrid zone, yet Mr. Barker had cried out that the stranger’s hand felt cold.

In the toss for innings victory fell to us. So we went in. I led the van. My associate was a youth named Fenning. He was a mere lad, and looked too much of a lout to be much of a cricketer. Mr. Barker led the bowling. I soon saw that if he had any strength it was not as a bowler. If I kept my head, I told myself, and he carried away my bails, it would be owing to the ground; for a rougher piece of turf, I suppose, few wickets have been pitched upon. But I was far too nervous to take liberties even with Mr Barker. And, indeed, when the first over was finished, and I found myself still in, I drew a long breath of self-congratulation.

The other bowler was, in his own line, as meritorious a specimen as his captain. So, on the whole, things were going better than I had expected. I had scored eleven, six off Mr. Barker, and the rest off his friend. Even Fenning had hit up

two—literally hit up—*bien entendu*. I was really beginning to think that I was getting set, which, in my palmiest days had only happened once—thrice happy day!—when something took place which showed me, not for the first time, the advisability of never counting your chickens till the eggs are hatched.

Mr. Barker was just about to commence an over. He actually had the ball in his hand, when the substitute—the stranger who had volunteered to fill the place of the eleventh man—came marching right across the field. Mr. Barker saw him coming, and called out to him to stay where he was. But, wholly unheeding, the substitute strode on. He reached Mr. Barker, and, without saying a word, so far as I could perceive, he coolly held out his hand for the ball. I fully expected that the Latchmere captain would remonstrate, and not only remonstrate, but remonstrate strongly; but, to my surprise, he instantly surrendered the ball, and slunk rather than walked to the place which the stranger had just quitted. So the substitute was left to bowl.

Without doubt he was an eccentric character. Up to that moment he had been fielding in his woollen muffler, his overcoat, and, last but not least, his wonderful top hat. These, however, he now doffed, and laid in a heap upon the ground. Their disappearance revealed the fact that he wore a tight-fitting jacket which was the same wonderful pattern in checks as his trousers. From the look of him, I certainly never supposed that he could bowl. My surprise was, therefore, all the greater when I discovered that he could. His action was peculiar. He went right up to the wicket, and stood quite still, delivering the ball with a curious flourish of the wrist. Its pace was amazing. It pitched a good two feet to the off, and broke right in—perhaps aided by the ground, though he certainly had found a spot. I was so astounded by the pace—which reminded me of the old stories told of Lillywhite; you could hear it ‘humming’ in the air—that I never even moved my bat. It was that which saved me. As it was the bat was all but driven out of my hand. I told myself that on the arrival of a second edition I should have to go. Yet I did manage to stop the next four balls—how, I have not the faintest notion; but the sixth—for it seemed that, in those parts, they bowled six to the over—took my middle stump, breaking it clean off at the top.

As I entered the tent the scorer cried out—

‘What name?’

‘Tom Benyon,’ replied the bowler.

Mr. Hedges, who was seated at the scorer's side, brought down his fist upon the trestle-table with a bang.

'I knew it was! I knowed him all along!' Mr. Hedges was in a state of odd excitement. 'That chap who bowled you ain't a man, sir—he's a ghost.'

'He manages to put a good deal of pace on the ball for a ghost,' I answered.

'And so he ought to. Did you hear what name he said? He said Tom Benyon! There wasn't a better cricketer in all these parts than Tom Benyon used to be. He played up in Lunnon more than once, I know, and got well paid for playing too. But he always was a queer sort, was Tom. I knew him well. I saw him buried. And if it is him, and not his ghost, he ain't grown a day older these twenty years, he ain't.'

I laughed. I supposed the old gentleman was jesting. But not a bit of it. When our second man had gone to the wicket Mr. Sapsworth drew me aside.

'I don't like the look of this,' he said.

'Nor I,' I answered, supposing he referred to Mr. Benyon's bowling. 'He'll bring down our stumps like ninepins.'

'It isn't that. It—it's the man,' he said.

'Do you mean the ghost?' I asked jokingly.

'It's easy to laugh. But ——' Mr. Sapsworth paused. I could see he was ashamed of himself, yet had his suspicions none the less. 'I thought I had seen him before, and I had. It *is* Tom Benyon.'

'He says he is Tom Benyon, and I suppose he should know best.'

'Yes.' Mr. Sapsworth fidgeted. 'But Tom Benyon's been dead these twenty years.'

'Dead!' I cried, and laughed. 'He showed himself too much alive for me, at any rate.'

'When I was a youngster,' continued Mr. Sapsworth, 'Tom Benyon used to come into my father's shop to be shaved. He was always on the drink. One morning I was all alone, minding the shop for father, when he came in, mad drunk. I never shall forget that morning, never. He made me sit in the shaving-chair, and set about to shave me. He soaped me all over—face and hair and all. I was that there frightened I couldn't make a sound. I never shall forget how I sat and watched him, with the soap all in my eyes, as he put an edge upon the razor. Then he set about shaving off my hair. He had got off about half of it, and I was

streaming with blood, when who should come in but my father. If he hadn't Tom Benyon would have made an end of me.'

He paused. I perceived that the mere recollection of his little adventure affected him unpleasantly.

'There was something queer about his death. Some people said it was drink had done for him, some of 'em said he had done for himself. Anyhow, the whole country-side was at his funeral. I was there. I remember it as plainly as though it was yesterday.'

While I was looking at Mr. Sapsworth, and pondering his words, there came the sound of laughter from the middle of the ground. It was not a loud laugh, but it was a distinctly disagreeable one. I looked round. Mr. Benyon was laughing at Mr. Fenning's discomfiture. He had served him as he had served me—he had taken his middle stump right out of the ground. I turned to Mr. Sapsworth.

'You follow.'

'Me!' Mr. Sapsworth turned several shades whiter. 'Me!' He looked about him with a frightened air. 'Mr. Trentham, I—I can't,' he said.

'Nonsense, Sapsworth! You don't mean to say that you are going to allow yourself to be frightened by any nonsense about a ghost, and in broad daylight too!'

The little man did not look by any means reassured by my tone of derision. He seemed more inclined to take to his heels than to take his place at the wickets. It is not impossible that he might have done so had he not been addressed from a different quarter.

'Bob Sapsworth!' It was Mr. Benyon calling to the little barber right across the field. 'Come and be shaved!'

I own that I myself was startled. The words were apposite, to say the least of it. We had just been speaking of Mr. Sapsworth's experience of the shaver's art as practised by Mr. Benyon's hands, and here was Mr. Benyon's namesake inviting him, if not to be cut, at least to come again. On Mr. Sapsworth the effect of the invitation was surprising. He had on his pads, his hat was in his hand. Without a word he shuffled towards the stumps. If ever I saw a man go to the wickets in a state of 'mortal funk,' I saw him then.

I myself moved towards the scoring-tent. The state of things within it at once impressed me as peculiar. It had been filled, a little time ago, with jovial faces. Now, the owners of those faces might have been attendants at a funeral. And many a

man has had a livelier following to the grave than I saw assembled then.

Fenning came shambling into the tent. I spoke to him.

'Mr. Benyon's bowling was too much for you, eh, Fenning?'

Unless I am mistaken, Mr. Fenning wiped a tear out of his eye. He certainly put up his hand and rubbed the optic with his knuckles.

'I never seed such bowling! 'Tain't fair!' he said.

'What is there unfair about it, Fenning?'

'It comes so sharp. I never seed the ball afore there was my wickets down.'

I smiled. Not so the company. They regarded Mr. Fenning's words with different eyes. Mr. Hedges gave expression to the general opinion.

'You ain't never seen such bowling afore, and you won't never see such bowling again. 'Cause why? 'Cause it's a ghost that's bowling, not a man!'

Mr. Fenning looked about him with open eyes, and with open mouth as well. 'A ghost!' he mumbled.

'A ghost!' said Mr. Hedges.

I expostulated.

'Come, Mr. Hedges, you frighten the lad. I am surprised, too, that a man of your age and experience and wisdom should talk nonsense about ghosts.'

Mr. Hedges looked up at me a little sharply.

'If he ain't a ghost, what's become of the things that he's took off?'

I asked him what he meant. He pointed across the ground.

'He took off his hat and his coat and his scarf, and he laid 'em on the grass. He ain't touched 'em, and no one ain't took 'em, yet they're gone! We saw 'em go. If he ain't a ghost, what's become of the things that he's took off?'

Mr. Hedges grew a little excited. I looked in the direction in which the old gentleman was pointing. The garments he referred to had apparently vanished, but, of course, their disappearance was susceptible of a most natural explanation. I should have maintained this proposition with more confidence had it not been for something which immediately occurred.

Mr. Benyon was preparing to deliver his first ball to Mr. Sapsworth, and as I eyed him I noted the extremely unworkmanlike attitude in which Mr. Sapsworth awaited the delivery. Preparatory to delivering the ball Mr. Benyon divested himself

of his remarkable coat, which matched his trousers, and in so doing disclosed a waistcoat which matched his coat. Neatly folding up the garment, he laid it beside him on the ground. No sooner did it touch the ground than it disappeared. I am unable to say how, but it did, and that before the eyes of all the lookers-on. This singular behaviour on the part of that curious garment took me by surprise.

After that I was prepared to excuse a certain amount of nervousness on the part of Mr. Sapsworth. To Mr. Benyon Mr. Sapsworth's nervousness seemed to afford positive pleasure. He cried, in a tone which was perhaps *meant* to be jovial:

‘Now, Bob Sapsworth, prepare to be shaved!’

The ball went from his hand like lightning. Mr. Sapsworth's behaviour was very unlike that of a workman. Instead of trying to hit the ball, he seemed to be doing his best to let the ball hit him. And it did hit him—on the thigh. Mr. Sapsworth yelled. Mr. Benyon sent down his second ball—whack! not against the bat, but, I should say, as nearly as possible against the same portion of Mr. Sapsworth's frame which it had struck before. Any cricketer might have been demoralised after receiving two such blows, but he would at least have tried to get out of the way of the ball instead of in it. Mr. Sapsworth placed his person exactly where the ball might be expected to come, and, for once in a way, expectation was realised—it did come. The third, fourth, and fifth balls found an exactly similar billet, and the sixth not only knocked his bat out of his trembling hands, but all three of his stumps clean out of the ground.

‘I said I'd shave you, Bobby!’ shouted Mr. Benyon as the victim went limping from the place of execution.

‘Next man in,’ I said.

‘I ain't going in,’ courteously rejoined the player whose turn it was to follow. I was about to ask him why, when I was saved the trouble by Mr. Benyon.

‘Jack Hawthorn!’ Oddly enough, the man's name was Hawthorn, though how Mr. Benyon came to know that he was next man in is more than I can say. Mr. Hawthorn was a huge fellow quite six feet high; but at the sound of Mr. Benyon's voice he rose, docile as a child. ‘I'm waiting for you.’

Without pads Mr. Hawthorn went striding across the turf, content to use the bat which Mr. Sapsworth had left lying on the ground. That hero came limping into the tent.

'It is a ghost,' he said.

I could not but feel that the fellow was something of a cur. To this feeling I gave expression.

'Ghost or no ghost, rather than let him pound me all over the body with the ball, I would have made one try to hit at it. And you told me that you were an all-round player.'

No doubt the man must have been suffering considerable pain, but I was too much annoyed at his cowardice to feel for him. Besides, the whole thing was so preposterous.

Undoubtedly, as a trundler Mr. Benyon was superb. I have no hesitation in saying that I do not remember to have seen finer bowling than his on any ground in England. He combined two things which, so far as I am aware, are not to be found together in any living player—pace *and* break. But it was not his bowling, fine as it was, which promised to work our ruin, so much as the absurd belief entertained by the members of the team that he—check trousers and all—was a ghost. An idea came into my head. I resolved that I would ask him, point-blank, in the face of all the people, if he *was* a ghost. If his answers did not satisfy the doubters nothing would.

The opportunity occurred just as he was about to begin his following over. Moving from the tent, I advanced towards the wickets.

'Excuse me, Mr. Benyon, but before you commence to bowl might I speak to you a word?'

He turned and looked at me. As he did so I was conscious that, in the most emphatic sense of the word, his appearance was peculiar. He looked as though he were a corpse, and an unhealthy corpse to boot—the sort of corpse that no man would spend a night with willingly. And this unpleasant appearance was accentuated by his ridiculous attire. Fancy a dead man, of a bloated habit of body, taking his walks abroad in a suit of checks—each check twelve inches square! I was so uncomfortably conscious that Mr. Benyon did not look a clubbable kind of man that I faltered in my speech.

'You will excuse me, Mr. Benyon, if the question I am about to put to you appears to you even worse than absurd, but the members of my team have some ridiculous notion in their heads that you are a certain Tom Benyon who died twenty years ago, and who now lies buried in the churchyard. I am sure, therefore, you will forgive my asking, are you a ghost?'

Mr. Benyon eyed me, and I eyed him—not willingly, but

because, for some reason or other, I could not help it. At last he answered, speaking in a sort of shout,

‘I am.’

Of course such an answer was absurd—ridiculously absurd. As I sit here writing no man could be more conscious of its absurdity than I am. But *then* it was not *that* I was so conscious of as of a cold shiver going all down my back, and of a sort of feeling as though Providence had sent me out into the world knock-kneed. I struggled against a strong inclination to sit down upon the turf and stop there. But being at the same time dimly aware that I was making an unexampled fool of myself, I made a frantic effort to regain the use of my tongue.

‘Oh, you—you are a ghost! I—I thought so. Tha—thanks.’

How I got back into the tent I have not the faintest notion. But I do know that after that exhibition of the sort of stuff that I was made of, disaster followed hard upon disaster.

The first wicket—my own—had fallen for thirteen runs. The second, and the third, had seen the score unaltered. Hawthorn was the fourth man in. He was so fortunate as to appear upon the scene just as I put my fatal question—it was to give him a chance I put it. The answer settled him—that is, if there was anything of him left to settle. I am not able to state exactly what became of him, but I have a clear impression that he was out at the end of the over. Moreover, of this I am well assured, that nine wickets fell without an addition being made to the score. I suppose that is, in its way, a record.

Whether Mr. Benyon owed the inhabitants of his native place a grudge the evidence before me does not enable one to decide; but, if he did, he certainly paid it in full that day. Although he bowled at the wickets he hit the players first. Nor was this, so far as appearances went, in any way his fault; they seemed to have a singular knack of getting just in the way of the ball. The order of the innings was this: the ball hit each man five times, and the wickets once. At the end of each of Mr. Benyon’s overs a batsman returned to the tent a sadder and a lamer man.

One case in particular was hard. It was the case of Mr. Hedges. He was the last man in; when his turn came, with the score still at thirteen runs, he stuck to his seat like glue.

‘Won’t somebody go in for me?’ he asked, as he saw his doom approaching. ‘I ain’t no cricketer,’ he added, a little later on. ‘Now am I?’ He asked the question of his friends, but his friends were still. He addressed himself to Mr.

Sapsworth. 'Bob Sapsworth, you asked me to play, now didn't you? You says to me, "If you play, William Hedges," you says, "I shouldn't be surprised but what the gent as we're going to ask to captain us stands you a free lunch," you says, "not to speak of drinks," you says.' I pricked up my ears at this, but held my tongue. 'But you says nothing about being bowled at by a ghost, now did you now? I ask you, Bob Sapsworth, did you now?'

Mr. Sapsworth was silent. The old gentleman went on:

'I sha'n't go in,' he announced. That was when the ninth batsman had received Mr. Benyon's first ball—upon his person. 'Nothing sha'n't make me go in to be bowled at by a ghost.' This second announcement followed the delivery of the second ball upon the batsman's person. 'I ain't no cricketer, and I don't know nothing about the rules of the game, and I ain't going to stand up to be chucked at by a ghost,' and Mr. Hedges struck his fist upon the board. There came a yell from the wickets; Mr. Hedges gripped his seat tightly with his hands. 'I won't go in!' he cried. Another ball, another yell. Mr. Hedges repeated his determination over and over again, as if in its reiteration he sought for strength to keep it. 'I won't! I won't! I won't.'

The last ball of the over, and the ninth of our hopes had fallen. A pause ensued. The batsman came limping towards the tent. Mr. Hedges' time was come; he clutched at the seat with the frenzy of despair.

'Bill Hedges!' sang out Mr. Benyon; but Mr. Hedges gave no sign. 'Bill Hedges!' Still no reply. 'Bill Hedges, have I got to come and fetch you?'

At that awful threat the old gentleman did rise. His ample form went waddling across the ground.

'I—I'm a-coming, Tom. I—I ain't no cricketer, Tom. Do—don't you be too hard on me. If you must hit me, let it be behind.'

'Where's your bat?'

The inquiry came from Mr. Benyon. Mr. Hedges had arrived at the wicket without that batsman's requisite. He scratched his head.

'My bat? I—I don't want no bat. I—I ain't no cricketer. You can hit me quite as well without it, Tom.'

'Go and get your bat!'

Mr. Hedges went and got it. When he had it it was evident that he had but rudimentary notions of its uses. He held it

gingerly, round side foremost, as though he were afraid that if he grasped it tightly it would burn him.

‘Bill Hedges, do you remember those drinks you paid for me the Saturday week before I died?’

‘No, Tom; I can’t say rightly as how I do.’

‘You did. It was at the “Crown and Anchor.” I had no money. I said if you’d stand Sam I’d pay you back again; but I never did. I’ll pay you now.’

Mr. Benyon paid him, five times over. The old gentleman bore it like a lamb. Whack—whack—whack—whack—whack! and the fall of his wicket at the end. As he returned towards the tent he wiped his wrinkled brow.

‘I always said I wasn’t no cricketer, and I ain’t,’ he said.

Our innings was over—for thirteen runs. We sat there, moping in a crowd, I among the rest, when Mr. Benyon, bustling up, reminded me of my duties as a captain.

‘Now then, turn out. Send your men into the field. We can’t stop here all day. I’m first man in; soon I’ll have to go, and I haven’t had a smack at a cricket-ball these twenty years!’

We looked at each other. One part of his address gave us a certain gratification—that part in which he stated that he soon would have to go. We turned out. I suppose a more unpromising set of fieldsmen never yet took their places in the field. The Latchmere men went slouching towards the tent; some of them, I noticed, instead of going in stole towards the rear. These, I suspect, stole off the ground; I never set eyes on them again.

‘Mr. Trentham, I—I can’t bowl,’ whispered Mr. Sapsworth to me as we moved across the turf.

He and I had agreed that we should start the bowling. I confess that I felt no more inclined to act up to the letter of our agreement than he did. But Mr. Benyon intervened.

‘Now, Bob Sapsworth, you take the bowling one end, and let your captain take the other. Captain, you take first over.’

I obeyed without a murmur. It might have been quite a usual thing to see in a match a member of one team ordering about the captain of the other. I do not think that our field was arranged on scientific principles; I may certainly claim that I had nothing to do with its arrangement. There is a suspicion floating through my mind that at one or two points—two, or more—men were placed unusually close together. For instance, at ‘deep mid-off—very deep mid-off—Mr. Hawthorn and Mr. Hedges were

not only doing their best to trample on each other's toes, but each was seeking for a place of security behind the other's back.

Mr. Barker shared with Mr. Benyon the honour of being first man in. The Latchmere captain, as a captain, had become quite as much a figurehead as I had. His bearing was indicative of extreme depression. I think he had learned that to take, off-hand, the first substitute who offered, was, now and then, unwise.

To enable him to bat with more advantage, Mr. Benyon had removed his waistcoat, which matched his trousers *and* his coat. What he had done with it I cannot say; possibly it had vanished, with his other garments, into air. Now he had on a bright red flannel shirt—his tastes in costume seemed a trifle lurid—the sleeves of which were turned up above the elbows. His pose was almost as peculiar as his costume. He stood bolt upright, his legs together, his feet drawn heel to heel; not at all in the fashion of a modern cricketer, who seeks to guard his wickets with his legs. His bat he held straight down in front of him, the blade swinging gently in the air.

I am afraid I wasted more time in preparing to deliver my first ball than I need have done; but if Mr. Benyon had not had a smack with a bat for twenty years it was a good fifteen since I had bowled a ball. After such a lapse of time one requires to pull oneself together before exhibiting one's powers to a cricketer of Mr. Benyon's calibre. He, however, did not seem to recognise the necessity which I myself felt that I was under.

'Hurry up, sir! Don't I tell you that soon I'll have to go?'

I hurried up. I gave him an overhand full pitch which would have made a decent catch for point, if point had been close in, which he wasn't. However, in any case Mr. Benyon would have saved him the trouble. He hit the ball a crack the like of which I had never seen before. He drove it over the hedge, and over the trees, and up to the skies, and out of sight.

'I don't think that's a bad little smack to start with,' he observed. 'I like your kind of bowling, mister. I suppose that's a boundary.' He called to the scorer—if there was one, which I doubt—'Put down Tom Benyon six!' He turned again to me. 'It's no good wasting time looking for that ball. I've another in my pocket you can have.'

He put his hand into his trousers pocket. Those remarkable garments fitted him like eel-skins. I had certainly never supposed that he could by any possibility have such a thing as a

cricket-ball in one of the pockets. But it appeared that he had. He drew one out and threw it up to me.

My second ball was a colourable imitation of my first, only this time it was wide to leg. To long-leg Mr. Benyon sent it flying.

‘Put down Tom Benyon another six!’ he cried. ‘I *do* like your bowling, mister. I’ve got another ball which you can have.’

He produced a second ball from the same pocket from which the first had come. I could scarcely believe my eyes. But I was discovering, with Horatio, that there were more things in heaven and earth than had been contained in my philosophy. Since Mr. Benyon professed such affection for the style of bowling which I favoured, I sent him down another sample. This time it was fairly straight—by which I mean that it would not have pitched more than a yard from the wickets if Mr. Benyon had allowed it to pitch, which he didn’t. He treated it as he had done the first—he drove it, with terrific force, right above my head.

‘Never mind about the ball,’ he said. ‘I’ve got another in my pocket.’

He had—the third. And in the same pocket from which the other two had come.

My fourth ball he treated to a swipe to square-leg. He seemed to have a partiality for swiping. Quite unnecessarily he allowed that this was so.

‘I do like a ball which I can get a smack at,’ he remarked as he produced a fourth ball from the same pocket of his tightly fitting trousers which had contained the other three. ‘A swipe does warm me so. Your kind of bowling, mister, ’s just the thing.’

It was kind of him to say so; though, to my thinking, his remark did not convey a compliment. When he sent my fifth ball out of sight I wished that his love for swiping had been-less, or my bowling of another kind. The sixth, however, which he also produced from the same wondrous store contained in his breeches pocket, he contented himself with what he called ‘snicking.’

‘That’s what I call a pretty snick,’ he said.

The ‘snick’ in question was a tremendous drive to deep mid-off. It was stopped, quite involuntarily, by Mr. Hawthorn and Mr. Hedges. So far as I could see, it stunned the pair of them. Neither of them made the slightest attempt to return the ball.

‘Run it out!’ cried Mr. Benyon. He and Mr. Barker began to run. They ran four, and then they ran two more, and still the

ball was not thrown in. Mr. Benyon urged the fielders on. 'Hurry up, Bill Hedges!'

Mr. Hedges did not hurry up; he never could have hurried up, even if his manner of 'fielding' the ball had not wholly deprived him of his wind. But the ball was at last thrown in—when the pair had run eleven. Forty-one runs off his first over was a result calculated to take the conceit out of the average bowler. And Mr. Benyon's last performance, his 'snick,' had placed him at the other wicket, prepared to receive Mr. Sapsworth's bowling—when it came.

'Now, Bob Sapsworth, I'll have a smack at you!' he said.

He had. I felt for Mr. Sapsworth. But since I had suffered it was only fair that he should suffer too. Crack—smack—whack went the balls out of sight in all directions. And for each ball that disappeared Mr. Benyon produced another from his breeches pocket. I felt that these things must be happening to me in a dream. I was rapidly approaching the condition in which Alice must have been in Wonderland—prepared for anything.

Time went on. Mr. Sapsworth and I bowled over after over. Mr. Benyon was making a record in tall scoring. No performance of 'W. G.'s' ever came within many miles of it. And the balls he lost! And the balls which he produced! And the diabolical ingenuity with which he managed, at the close of every over, to change his end! If Mr. Barker did no hitting, he did some running. He never had a chance to make a stroke, but his partner took care to make him run an incredibly large odd number as a wind up to every over. Mr. Benyon did not seem to be distressed by the exertion in the least; Mr. Barker emphatically did.

Mr. Benyon had buoyed us up by his statement that he would soon have to go. His ideas of soon were different from ours. I suppose, at the outside, our innings had lasted half an hour. How long we bowled to Mr. Benyon is more than I can say. I know that I bowled until I felt that I should either have to stop or drop. By degrees one fact began to be impressed upon me. It was this—that the number of spectators was growing smaller by degrees and beautifully less. Originally there had been quite a crowd assembled. In course of time this had dwindled to half a dozen stragglers. A little later on even these had gone. And not only spectators but cricketers had disappeared. If my eyes did not deceive me, there was not a member of the Latchmere team left on the ground. They had had enough of Mr. Benyon—or his ghost.

What was more, some of our own team took courage, and leg-bail. I caught one of them—the lad Fenning—in the act of scrambling through the hedge. But I had not the heart to stop him. I only wished that I had been so fortunate as to have led the van.

The thing grew serious. So far as I could see, Mr. Hawthorn, Mr. Hedges, Mr. Sapsworth, and I were the only members of the Storwell team left on the ground. And the reflection involuntarily crossed my mind—what fools we were to stay! The amount of running about we had to do! And the way in which Mr. Benyon urged us on! The perspiration was running off from us in streams—I had never had such a ‘sweater’ before!

‘I do like your kind of bowling, mister,’ Mr. Benyon would constantly remark.

If I had had an equal admiration for his kind of batting we should have been quits, but I had not, at least not then.

A little later, looking round the field, I found that Mr. Hawthorn had disappeared, and that Mr. Hedges, stuck in a hedge, was struggling gallantly to reach safety on the other side. It was the last ball of Mr. Sapsworth’s over. Mr. Benyon ran *thirteen* for a hit to leg. He made Mr. Barker run them too—it was the proverbial last straw. As Mr. Barker was running the thirteenth run, instead of going to his wicket he dropped his bat—the bat which he had never had a chance to utilise—and bolted off the field as though Satan was behind him. Mr. Benyon called out to him, but Mr. Barker neither stopped nor stayed. It seemed that the match was going to resolve itself into a game of single wicket.

To make things better, when I came up to bowl I perceived that Mr. Sapsworth’s power of endurance had reached its tether. The position he had taken up in the field had not much promise of usefulness. He first stood close up to the hedge, then he stood in the middle of the hedge, then—I doubt if he *stood* upon the other side. But at least he had vanished from my ken. And I was left alone to bowl to Mr. Benyon. That over!

‘I do like your kind of bowling, mister,’ he observed when, as usual, he sent my first ball out of sight. ‘Never mind about the ball. I’ve got one in my pocket you can have.’

He had. He produced it—always from the same pocket. It was about the second thousand.

‘It does warm me so to swipe.’ This he said when he had sent my second ball on a journey to find its brother. Then a

ball or two later on, 'I call that a tidy smack.' The 'smack' in question had driven the ball, for anything I know to the contrary, a distance of some five miles or so.

The next ball I fielded. It was the first piece of fielding I had done that day, and that was unintentional. It laid me on the ground. It was some moments before I recovered myself sufficiently to enable me to look round. When I did so no one was in sight. I was alone in the field. The opposite wicket was deserted. The bat lay on the ground. And Mr. Benyon had gone!

RICHARD MARSH.

Thunderstorms.

THUNDERSTORMS naturally attract universal attention when they occur, and it may, perhaps, be of interest to point out some particulars that have been ascertained about them.

The most obvious facts are that a heavy cloud passes over the observer, and that from it lightning appears, followed, after a greater or less interval, by thunder; and that usually heavy rain or hail falls from the cloud.

The damage wrought by these occurrences, whether by lightning strokes or by the hail, is so serious that, in countries especially liable to such visitations, hail insurance forms an important item in the farmer's calculations. In many countries such insurance is in the hands of the Government, and accordingly statistics as to the amount of losses are to be obtained; whereas in these islands, where insurance is in the hands of private companies, information as to the expenditure of these companies is naturally not published.

Thus much, however, is known—that over a definite area, covering Huntingdonshire and parts of the neighbouring counties, the damage done by hail as measured by the amount paid for insurance is materially greater than that wrought in other parts of England over a similar area. This fact has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

As regards the liability of certain districts to suffer damage from thunderstorms, it has been maintained by several authorities that these visitations are steadily increasing in frequency.

A most elaborate inquiry into the records of such occurrences was printed in the Journal of the Statistical Office of Berlin for 1886. From this it appears that the evidence indicated no general increase in the frequency of lightning strokes, but, on the contrary, rather a decrease. Houses with soft, or, in other words, thatched, roofs are struck about seven or eight times more frequently than ordinary slated dwelling-houses. Houses in towns are much less frequently affected than those in the country.

The geological character of the soil has a very great influence on the risk. If this for a limestone soil be taken as 1, that for a sandy soil is 9, and for swampy land 22. (This may possibly in part account for the exceptional amount of damage done in the Fen country, as has just been described.)

As regards the different classes of trees, if the risk to a beech be taken as 1, that to a conifer (fir or spruce) is 15, to an oak 54, and to other deciduous trees 40.

Another investigator accounts for the comparative immunity of the beech by the fact that its leaves are edged with short hairs, which allow the electricity collected in the leaves to escape quietly.

To give some sort of idea of the havoc caused by some of these thunderstorms, we may quote the following notes as to the storm of August 21, 1879, in France: 'At 9 P.M. the front of the storm extended from Brussels to Perpignan in the Pyrenees, a distance of 600 miles. Here we have a line of destruction 600 miles long, and from twenty to thirty miles broad, sweeping like a curtain across the country at a rate of about thirty miles an hour, wrecking in a few minutes vineyards which are worth many thousands of pounds, and destroying at the last moment the husbandman's labour for the whole year.'

As to the actual origin of atmospheric electricity, authorities are not at all agreed, and the observations made on its phenomena (made at different stations) do not accord in a satisfactory manner. In fact, it appears as if the indications of the instruments are due to local causes, so that they do not lend themselves to any useful generalisations. When a thunderstorm is actually raging in the neighbourhood of a station, the indications of electrometers thereat are most erratic and violent, but it cannot be said that any electrometer enables us to perceive the approach of a storm one whit earlier than we are able to do by careful watching of the clouds.

As regards forecasting thunderstorms, this can be done in a general sort of way; but it is not practicable to predict which villages or parishes, or even counties, will be visited. When the daily weather charts are drawn, if we find that there is an unevenness in the isobaric lines—that is, if these are wavy, or bulge out irregularly—we know that thunderstorms are likely to burst somewhere or other over the country, but that is all we can say. At each station the barometer is unsteady—the mercury moving up and down in the tube—during the actual continuance of the storm; but this oscillation of the mercurial column has

nothing to do with the irregularity in the isobaric lines above mentioned. Forecasting these storms is, therefore, always an uncertain and a thankless task, for local success is rarely attained.

Among the earliest symptoms of the approach of a thunderstorm is the appearance on the western horizon of a line of *cumulus* ('woolpack') clouds exhibiting a peculiar turreted structure. I say on the western horizon, for most of our changes of weather come from that quarter, and it has been proved that thunderstorms, like windstorms, advance over the country, generally, from some westerly point. This bank of clouds moves on, and over it appear first streamers and then sheets of lighter upper cloud—*cirrus*, or 'mare's tail'—which spread over the sky with extreme rapidity. The heavy cloud mass comes up under this film, and it is a general observation that no electrical explosion or downfall of rain ever takes place from a cloud unless streamers of *cirrus*, emanating from its upper surface, are visible when the cloud is looked at sideways from a distance.

Thunderstorms are generally accompanied by falls of hail as well as rain, and these hailstones sometimes assume the form of lumps of ice—some even as large as hens' eggs, and weighing several ounces, having been known to fall. The stories of masses of hailstones, weighing many pounds, having been found after storms, are explained by the fact that the hailstones, after they have fallen, may have frozen to each other and formed a solid lump on the ground.

Large hailstones are composed of alternate layers of clear crystalline and white porous ice, and many of them consist of an aggregate of smaller hailstones which have attached themselves to one stone, as a nucleus, and then the mass so formed has received external coatings of ice. The compound structure of such stones becomes manifested when the mass gradually thaws. In some cases these stones are coated with crystals of ice in six-sided prisms and pyramids, as perfectly formed as the specimens of quartz or of calc spar crystals which are to be seen in mineral collections. It is very hard to believe that such beautifully formed crystals as these can be the product of any instantaneous process of formation.

It is these heavy blocks of ice which do the greatest amount of damage, as naturally a lump, weighing even an ounce, is a formidable missile when it falls from a height of even a thousand feet. When these falls are about to take place, observers have reported that a peculiar rattling sound is heard in the atmosphere,

evidently from collisions between these stones, striking one another in their fall. A very careful observer, who was overtaken by one of these falls in the Caucasus, near Tiflis, states that it occurred immediately after an ordinary hail-shower, and that he could see the successive showers marching over the country, and noticed that between the last edge of the falling hail and the front edge of the falling ice blocks, there was a distinct break, through which he could see the sun shining on the hills in the background.

It was on this particular occasion that the best specimens of crystal-bespangled hailstones have been recorded and sketched, but others have been reported from Natal, and quite recently from Philadelphia, U.S., October 1, 1889.

When such a visitation of ice-lumps takes place, the entire crops of the district affected by it are destroyed. Such a storm passed over Richmond in August 1879, and in five minutes some ten thousand pounds' worth of damage was done, principally to conservatories. Naturally, Kew Gardens were among the principal sufferers.

It is a problem as yet unsolved to account for the suspension in the atmosphere of such objects as these hailstones, which frequently weigh much over an ounce. A recent theory, which seems to carry some probability with it, supposes that in the heart of every hail-cloud there is a whirlwind, or what is usually, but erroneously, termed a 'tornado.' It is well known that such disturbances exert a prodigious lifting power, raising heavy objects, such as carts, house-roofs, and even trees, and transporting them to considerable distances.

The theory is that when a drop of water in such a cloud is congealed, it is carried round and round in the vortex and lifted up, more moisture being condensed and frozen upon it at each gyration, until at last it is thrown out and falls. This would account for the alternate layers of which I have already spoken, but will not account for the formation of crystals, a growth which usually requires a considerable time.

Thunderstorms have been scientifically studied in various countries, and the broad fact has been elicited that they travel over the earth's surface like windstorms, but at a higher velocity. To give an idea of this, I may quote some statements made before the Royal Meteorological Society last June, in relation to the storm of the 2nd of that month, of which some of my readers may have a lively remembrance. This storm progressed from

Wiltshire to Edinburgh, over a distance of 400 miles, at a nearly uniform speed, the rate of travel being about 50 miles an hour. This is an unusually rapid rate of advance for a windstorm over these islands. I am not speaking of the velocity of the wind in the storm, but of the velocity of the storm system as a whole.

In this storm many of the hailstones which were collected weighed over an ounce. Some at Docking, near King's Lynn, were said to be three inches in diameter, and to weigh three and a half ounces. One was weighed at Barden Mill, near Tunbridge Wells, and was said to turn the scale at half a pound.

As regards the incessant character of the lightning in London, one observer at Highgate counted 1,244 displays during the two hours ending at 11.10 P.M., giving an average of over ten per minute. Another observer, at Westgate-on-Sea, gave a much higher figure for frequency; his attempt to count breaking down at the very high number of 131 per minute.

The mode of collecting information as to these storms is to issue printed forms, on which observers enter their records in a regular schedule, and forward it by post to the Royal Meteorological Society. A specimen of one of these forms, as issued by the Royal Meteorological Society, is given here.

THUNDERSTORM OBSERVATIONS.

Station,		A		Reference No.	
On	the	of		18	
General character.					
Intensity.				Near or distant ?	
THUNDER	First heard at h.	TIME	min.	s.	DIRECTION in the
	Loudest	"	"	"	" "
	Last	"	"	"	" "
LIGHTNING ...	First seen at	"	"	"	" "
(including Sheet)	Brightest	"	"	"	" "
	Last	"	"	"	" "
RAIN	Began	"	"	"	
	Heaviest	"	"	"	
	Ceased	"	"	"	
HAIL	Began	"	"	"	
	Heaviest	"	"	"	
	Ceased	"	"	"	

Thunderstorms are much more frequent in low latitudes than in high. In some tropical countries they are said to occur regularly every afternoon. At Rio the story was that at certain seasons, in issuing invitations to afternoon parties, it was usual to specify whether guests were to assemble before or after the thunderstorm. In Abyssinia, D'Abbadie gives, as the average of four years, 410.6 as the annual number of these storms. Many of these, however, consisted of only one or two flashes of lightning. In this region the daily period is so marked that out of 1,909 storms recorded in six years only twenty-two occurred between midnight and 11 A.M.

It was formerly believed that such storms never were noticed in the Arctic regions, but this is not the case, for one was experienced at Bell Sound, Spitzbergen, in 78° N. latitude, in August 1873; and a succession of thunderstorms was reported for several days in July 1870 on the west coast of Nova Zembla. At any rate, in such high latitudes they are very rare.

Thunderstorms are generally divided into two groups—heat thunderstorms and cyclonic thunderstorms. The former are the summer type, while the latter occur principally in autumn and winter. We may also say that the former are essentially continental, while the latter are characteristic of the ocean or island climate. In Iceland all the thunderstorms are of this latter type, and occur in winter. The same conditions show themselves on our own Atlantic coasts, where there is a decided maximum of frequency of such storms in winter, even in the latitude of the south-west of Ireland, at Valencia.

These circumstances are accounted for by the fact that thunderstorms are always associated with great differences of temperature in adjacent masses of air. Such conditions are most likely to occur in hot climates, where the soil gets excessively heated in the day-time, while the air at some distance above it is cool. In cold climates they occur in winter, where a shift of wind from South-west to North-west is sometimes accompanied by a sudden fall of temperature of 15° or even 20°.

We in this country owe our comparative immunity from thunderstorms to our damp climate. The fact is well known that it is comparatively difficult to perform any electrical experiments in these islands, and that all apparatus must be kept constantly in front of a fire in order to prevent moisture being deposited on it. Accordingly, we must suppose that the electrical disturbances which would give rise to explosions and severe

storms in France or Germany may pacify themselves comparatively quietly in our atmosphere, and at most only give rise to phenomena of a very moderate character.

I must now say something about the actual lightning flash, which is neither more nor less than a violent electric spark. Three different forms of lightning are generally admitted to exist: (1) The actual flash, or what is commonly called 'forked lightning.' (2) 'Sheet lightning,' which usually is the illumination of the sky by a lightning flash which takes place below the horizon. (3) 'Globular lightning.'

1. As to the term 'forked lightning,' the representations of it given by artists, which resemble the so-called thunderbolts placed in the hand of Jupiter, are quite absurd. The flash, when photographed, exhibits itself as a line which is continually changing its course, and is described as 'intensely crooked' by a very careful observer. It never proceeds for a time in a straight line, and then, turning at a sharp angle, going on further in an equally straight line, as is represented in pictures. The forking of it is very marked, and this occurs by side flashes passing off from the main track, and eventually losing themselves, like the ramifications of tree-roots. Occasionally the lightning appears to start from a point from which several flashes diverge in different directions.

2. 'Sheet lightning.'—Whenever a flash passes from cloud to cloud, or from cloud to earth, the light produced by it illuminates the sky in the neighbourhood, and the more intense the flash, the more brilliant and extensive the illumination. At times sheet lightning has been proved to emanate from an ordinary storm distant more than a hundred miles from the point of observation. It is, however, maintained, and apparently with good reason, that occasionally lightning of the 'sheet' type, such as what is called 'summer lightning,' takes place without any thunder; so that, in such cases, no actual thunderstorm is in progress.

3. 'Globular lightning.'—This is a rare phenomenon, and one which no one has as yet been able to produce in the laboratory, whereas the phenomena of the two previous types are easily produced. The general description of the occurrence is that a luminous ball is seen, moving very slowly, not touching any object, and eventually breaking up with a violent explosion and the appearance of several flashes of ordinary lightning. It is reported that persons have gone out from a house into a street to follow such a ball and watch its movements, so that the occurrence

must have lasted at least a number of seconds. Ordinary lightning, as is well known, is practically quite instantaneous. The size of the ball on different occasions has varied from that of an orange to that of a large glass lamp-globe, or even larger. Many physicists refuse to believe any accounts of this manifestation of the electrical discharge, but the reports of it are too numerous and circumstantial for us to consider them to be entirely baseless.

There is another way of classifying lightning flashes, and that is as to their colour. The seven colours of the solar spectrum are well known, but the spectrum of the electric spark differs materially from the solar spectrum. It exhibits rays which extend far beyond the extreme violet of the solar spectrum. We see, therefore, that in the light of lightning a wide range of colour is possible. If any of my readers have ever watched a storm carefully, they must have noted that some of the flashes were bluish, others reddish, &c. It is generally the blue tints which accompany the most destructive strokes.

Some attempts have been made to estimate the actual force exerted by a lightning flash. The late Mr. de la Rue constructed a magnificent electrical battery of many thousand cells. From experiments with this, the number of cells being raised to 15,000, and the 'potential' of each being rather over one 'volt,' it was found that 9,700 'volts'—say 9,500 cells—were required to produce a discharge through 1 centimètre (.3937 inch). Starting from these data, the electro-motive force requisite to produce a flash of lightning one mile (63,360 inches) in length, at ordinary pressures is 1,480,570,000 volts, practically given by a battery of fifteen hundred million cells.

A flash a mile in length is nothing very extraordinary, and it is therefore not to be wondered at that experiments to bring electricity down from the clouds are very dangerous, and have frequently had fatal results. Soon after Franklin, in the last century, had made his famous experiment with a kite, and proved that electricity existed in a thunder-cloud, natural philosophers generally began to imitate him. One of them in St. Petersburg, a Professor Richmann, arranged an apparatus to collect this electricity. On the first occasion of a storm he went to his laboratory to observe the effects. A ball of fire was seen to leap from the apparatus to his head, and he fell lifeless.

Having thus got some idea of the force exerted by lightning, it may be interesting to the reader to learn something as to the means we possess of guarding ourselves, or rather our houses, from injury.

A flash of lightning really consists of a discharge between two objects, say two clouds, or a cloud and the earth, oppositely electrified, the charges on which suddenly combine, with the manifestation of light and heat.

Lightning conductors are contrivances by which the electricity of the earth is allowed to escape quietly into the atmosphere, where it meets with electricity of the opposite character from the clouds, and the two neutralise each other quietly, without any explosive discharge, or, in other words, without lightning.

I need not go back to the first principles of electrical science and explain why it is that electricity passes most easily through metals, and escapes with greater freedom from sharp points than from rounded knobs. Assuming these elementary facts, I may say that on any object, such as a house or other building, the electricity tends to accumulate itself on all projecting portions of the roof, &c., and especially on the highest points of it.

The ideal complete lightning-rod system would call for a sharp-pointed copper rod erected at each of these projecting pinnacles, and rising above it, and would then connect all of these separate points by copper rods, and eventually carry down a stout copper rod to the earth.

Care must be taken that due attention is paid to certain main precautions: (1) The point of the conductor must be kept sharp; (2) the section of the conducting-rod must be sufficient to allow the electricity to pass along it; (3) the rod must be perfectly continuous; and, lastly (4), the rod must be efficiently connected with the ground.

1. The sharpness of the point is insured by gilding it or coating it with some metal which resists oxidation.

2. As to the section of the rod, a bar half an inch in diameter is sufficient for all ordinary buildings. Bars are not usually employed, as it is difficult to bend them over cornices, &c.; accordingly, either wire ropes or tapes are taken. The wire ropes are more liable to corrosion from wet getting in between the strands than are tapes, so that the latter are generally preferred. The metal used is always copper, being less oxidisable than iron, and being reasonably cheap and a very good conductor.

3. The continuity of the metallic connection from the highest point of the rod to the ground can only be secured by having as few joints as may be, and by making those joints as true and firm as possible by soldering.

The joints should be examined from time to time, for it is

often found, on examination of old conductors, that while the copper wire or tape is quite sound along its straight reaches, at the bends or joints corrosion has set in. As a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, a corroded conductor, such as has been described, is perfectly useless.

4. The earth connection.—It is not easy in all cases to insure that this is satisfactory. Electricity will not pass at all so easily into dry earth as into wet earth, and merely plunging the end of the rope or tape into wet earth is not sufficient. The conductor from the building should be soldered at its end to a large sheet of copper, say at least two square yards in area, buried in damp soil, or else soldered to the water or gas mains, so as to insure that a large surface of metal is in contact with damp earth.

Supposing that the whole system of protection against damage from lightning has been properly planned, the work should be carefully tested after its completion, because injury to it often occurs at the very last, owing to accidental causes, or to the carelessness of workmen.

Conductors should also be examined from time to time, throughout their whole length, to make sure that all the joints are sound. Care should also be taken that the earth in which the terminating plate is buried is kept thoroughly moist. If any of these particulars be neglected, the conductor will be practically useless, and will afford no protection to the structure.

The extreme practical importance of security against lightning must be my excuse for having been more diffuse over the subject of lightning-conductors than over other details of the phenomena and effects of thunderstorms.

ROBERT H. SCOTT.

Judith.

CHAPTER I.

HE glided forward, a slight, boyish figure, and bowed to the sea of faces, looking quiet and unconscious enough. In reality, he was very much alarmed, though only for a moment. He had never appeared in public before on any occasion half so critical, and it was for him, and no other, that all these people were listening and waiting. What if he broke down? But he put that thought aside, and resolved to play only to his old master, who was two hundred miles away, but with him, he knew, at that moment, all the same. He was going to play something quite easy, which he had often played before to Dr. Ferguson, and to later masters more renowned but hardly so dear. He looked round again on the audience, this time with quite a new sensation. 'You are a detail,' he thought resolutely. Then he drew the bow across the strings, and played, and Dr. Ferguson listened, for twelve minutes by the clock that stared at him—a small round white face, with black figures on it—from the front of the gallery opposite.

No longer a sea of faces only, but a sea of sound. Heat, and dust, and such a din! Had these people never before heard a violin solo? When were they going to stop? He had left the platform rapidly; but now the fiery German conductor, who was excited to the last degree, was shaking hands with him, and dragging him out again before the audience, all at once. And there was a wild, deafening cry going up from the whole hall of 'Encore, encore, *encore!*' He had decided beforehand what he would play in case of a recall, though he had not expected one; and he went back now and played it, though not so well as the first piece, because the din had confused him. But it did not matter, the audience did not know. When he had done the uproar began again, just as furiously as before. How delighted Dr. Ferguson would be! How thankful he was that he had not to play to them again that night! Everyone was congratulating him, and offering him wine and jelly; but nothing was clear to

him except that he was not hungry, and that he had promised, if possible, to send a line to Dr. Ferguson, and had better catch the next post. So when the manager next offered him champagne, he asked for a sheet of paper and an envelope and a stamp instead. It seemed rather an unreasonable demand; but the manager thought nothing of it, and promptly despatched an official, who thought nothing of it either, for writing materials. Then, with the buzz of voices going on round him, he wrote:—

‘DEAR MASTER—’

He looked up at the celebrated tenor singer standing by him, whose acquaintance, by means of an introduction from Dr. Ferguson himself, he had already made.

‘You know more about these things,’ he said reflectively. ‘Is it a success? I want to tell Ferguson.’

Sylvester laughed kindly.

‘I see,’ he said. ‘Wait.’ He waved him aside a moment, and scrawled with a pencil:—

‘DEAR FERGUSON,—Simply a *tremendous* triumph.

‘PAUL SYLVESTER.’

‘There,’ he said, passing the paper to the other. ‘Sign that.’ The young man wrote underneath it, laughing,

‘MAX DAVENANT.’

Then he paused. After all, for once in his life, the most renowned tenor singer might be mistaken. So he added philosophically, and carefully underlining the latter part of the sentence:—

‘They have clapped a great deal; *but it may be only their way.*’

CHAPTER II.

It might be only their way; but their way, for the present, it certainly was. When Paul Sylvester, who had taken a great fancy to the young fellow, came to see him the next day, he found his table already strewn with invitations, and himself sitting before them with a puzzled face.

‘What shall I do?’ he inquired. ‘People I never heard of are asking me to dinner. It is their way, I suppose.’

He pushed the invitations over to Sylvester, who scanned them, glancing now and then at his companion. The youthful, delicate face, with its unmistakable genius, perplexed him not a

little, and he turned and spoke kindly, feeling almost like an elder brother.

'I wouldn't go in for these,' he said shortly.

'No,' said Max. 'I have no desire. I know quite well,' he added reflectively, 'they do not really wish to see me. But what can I say? I can't tell them—that!'

'No, you can't,' returned Sylvester. 'Say you are already writing an oratorio, and have no time.'

'I'm not,' interjected Max mildly.

'It's all the same,' said Sylvester. 'Probably you will be soon. Only let these things alone. They will upset you for your music, and make you good for nothing. Stay,' he went on after a pause, during which he had scanned another note. 'This isn't so bad—Mrs. Marchmont. She's a friend of mine, and of your old master's, I believe.'

'Oh, yes,' said Max. 'That is different. I will go there.'

'Come with me, then,' said Sylvester. 'I am asked too, for Friday. It will probably be a quiet dinner, and—I think you had better not go.'

'Why not?' inquired Max curiously, amused at the other's sudden discomfiture.

'I don't know,' said Sylvester. 'Have you read Keats?'

'No,' Max replied promptly. 'I have only read Shakespeare.'

'I think,' said Sylvester vaguely, 'you won't care to go.'

'Why not?' Max repeated calmly. Sylvester made no direct answer.

'Of course it will come to that,' he said. 'But it is rather a bad beginning.'

'What is?' said Max, in desperation.

Sylvester muttered some words which Max, whose French was rather a weak point, did not catch. It was only months after that, in reading a volume of Keats, he came across and recognised them. They were:

'La Belle Dame sans merci.'

But at present he did not trouble about them, being baffled enough by Sylvester's strange behaviour.

'Aren't you going to take me?' he said laughingly, after a pause.

'No,' returned Sylvester, suddenly and decidedly.

Max took up the note and read it again. It was a very courteous, sincere, and kindly note, and it was from Dr. Ferguson's old friend. His heart smote him for being half ready to follow this new counsellor,

'Do you know,' he said, 'in spite of what you say, I intend to go.'

'Unalterably?' said Sylvester.

'Unalterably.'

'Very well,' said Sylvester, with a slight breath of relief. 'Then I will go with you. I will call for you on Friday at half-past seven.'

There was another concert before the Friday, and Max played an original composition, and was applauded to the echo. This time he was cooler, and able to look round at the audience with eyes that discerned faces musical or sympathetic, with the swift instinct by which a lover of books knows at a glance whether a book will suit him, or an artist divines what is good in the midst of seas of colour. It was right below him, in one of the foremost seats, that he saw the face he was destined to remember best. It was the face of a tall, stately girl, dressed in pure white. Her head was slightly raised, with its crown of dark hair; her glorious, sad eyes were gazing up at him. Her look met his. It was not an everyday look, for she had heard him play, and even Paul Sylvester said of her that she sometimes loved music. There was something in it that made him believe in her, for good and all, as only a few can believe. When the performance was ended he glanced at her again. She was not joining in the applause; her dark head, with the one white rose in it, was bent a little lower, and she sat quite still. Just that glance, and he turned away. But as he passed from the platform he met another pair of eyes, half serious and half satirical, which made him flush as if he had been detected in a crime. They were the eyes of Paul Sylvester.

Paul Sylvester had prophesied that it would be a quiet dinner party on Friday. It was not. A crowd of people was there; but Mrs. Marchmont, a pleasant, grey-haired, and stately dame, had some compassion on Max, and only introduced him to a few faces that seemed musical and friendly. Lastly she turned to a figure sitting, quite alone, in the recess of a window.

'Judith,' she said. The figure rose and came forward. This time it was not in white, but in the loveliest rose-colour, and there was a gleam of diamonds in the dark hair. She was here—and her name was Judith. She was looking at him, not as she had done before, but with a coldly critical, almost scornful look. If he had not known her he would have thought it impertinent; as it was, he did not understand, and waited vaguely for an explanation. It did not seem likely to arrive.

'My niece, Miss Desmond,' said Mrs. Marchmont. 'Mr. Davenant. The gong has just sounded. Will you take in Miss Desmond? Mr. Sylvester—Miss Burton.'

She left them, and presently the company descended into the dining-room. There, for an hour and a quarter, Max sat between Judith Desmond and Mrs. Marchmont, with Paul Sylvester nearly opposite.

It was not a pleasant hour and a quarter. At first Judith turned to Max, and addressed to him two or three remarks, so haughty that they were almost scathing, about London and about the weather. He owned to himself regretfully that there was little doubt of the impertinence, but he still waited to know the reason of it. Meanwhile Mrs. Marchmont talked to him shrewdly and kindly; yet he glanced at Judith now and then, since in all his life he had seen nothing so beautiful. She ignored him, however, through the rest of the meal, except for one or two studiously formal observations, and talked, in a high artificial voice, to her other neighbour. She spoke rather loudly; and Max, through Mrs. Marchmont's speeches and his own, heard nearly all that she said. He remembered vividly afterwards the nature of her conversation, which turned chiefly on the demerits of absent people, never on their merits. He remembered her curious, bitter tone, and how in the hour and a quarter she did not say a single kindly or charitable thing. He found that he could even rehearse many of her careless, flippant speeches, which remained with him persistently, though they were not even laughable. And he remembered how Paul Sylvester, sitting opposite, through *his* animated conversation, heard it all too.

The dinner ended at last, and the lingering over the wine, which was dull on this occasion to both Max and Sylvester, ended also. They all went up to the drawing-room.

Music was the next performance. Sylvester sang, and he sang magnificently, at Mrs. Marchmont's request, that fine old song, 'The Requital.' But Max was watching Judith. If she had been impertinent before, now she became intolerable. She was sitting between two rather insipid young men when the song's name reached her, and she promptly and decisively pulled out her pocket-handkerchief.

'This is a very pathetic song,' she said, in an explanatory tone, low, but quite clear, glancing from one to the other. Then she fixed her eyes serenely on the singer, who, for his part, seemed quite unconscious of them, and waited. Max watched

her. After all, she did not profess to be overcome. Once or twice she flaunted the pocket-handkerchief irresolutely, as if doubtful whether to apply it to her eyes—a manœuvre of which Sylvester was happily oblivious—and refrained, for fear, perhaps, some one who did not know her might think that she was really weeping. At the end she spoke in the same low, clear tone:

‘I did not cry,’ she said, turning to one of the young men. Then, with anxious interest, ‘Did you? No? Oh, what a pity! Mr. Sylvester makes nearly everyone cry with that song. We are very hard-hearted, aren’t we?’

She looked up then, and met Max’s glance of half-irritated wonder. She rose quickly—Mrs. Marchmont was asking her to sing—and went to the piano.

‘A Scotch song, Judith,’ said that kindly old lady.

She laughed clearly and coldly.

‘No, thank you, aunt. I fear I can’t appeal to the feelings of the audience like Mr. Sylvester.’

She sang a curious Italian rigmarole, an imitation of a nightingale, on which it improved. It was the most repellent song, almost, that Max had ever heard, though brilliant in the extreme. Her voice was wonderfully clear and flexible, and her execution almost faultless. It was nearly as good as a musical-box. The audience applauded her; and probably some were better pleased than with Sylvester’s singing. The latter, who was standing by Max, only said quietly:

‘That young lady was my pupil once. I should be proud of her!’

‘Why does she sing those things?’ said Max.

‘No one knows except herself,’ returned Sylvester.

‘She does not know,’ said Max reflectively. He could say on more, for just then Judith sailed down upon them.

‘You did not applaud me,’ she said to Sylvester.

‘The song was its own recompense,’ said Sylvester blandly.

‘To be sure,’ she returned. ‘I forgot. And you,’ she went on, turning to Max, ‘I fear did not like my song.’

‘No,’ said Max composedly.

‘Pray, what censure were you good enough to pass on it?’ Max pondered.

‘It was not like music,’ he said soberly. ‘Why do you ask me? You know that already.’

‘It was vulgar, I presume?’ inquired Judith amiably.

Max bent his head.

'This candour is the privilege of genius,' said Judith. 'I hear, Mr. Davenant, that you are eminently a genius.'

'I have heard so,' Max replied. Then he turned away, and left her with Paul Sylvester.

'How charmingly rude your young friend is!' she said meditatively to the latter. 'I am quite sure I shall like him.'

'I am sorry for it,' said Sylvester brusquely.

'Why?' said Judith pensively, raising her beautiful melancholy eyes. 'Ah, I see. You are afraid I shall influence your young friend, as they say in tracts, in a wrong direction.'

'I am sure you will if you can,' said Sylvester. 'He is too good to be spoiled, however, even by you.'

'Thank you,' said Judith very sweetly. 'But I will do my best.'

'I am sure of it,' said Sylvester.

'How generously,' she said, 'you judge me!'

There was a faint change in her voice that made Sylvester glance at her with a sudden mad hope; but he only met the mocking light in her eyes.

'It is difficult to judge you too generously!' he said.

'Very difficult. And now, excuse me. I will go back to our young friend. I wish to take lessons in the violin.'

A minute later Max, looking up from the book of engravings in which he had sought refuge from his utter bewilderment, saw her approaching. The first Judith, with something of the first look, which, he had begun to think, had never existed. But there was anger and bitterness too in her eyes, and he wondered if he guessed the reason.

The hauteur had departed: she was gentle, almost submissive. Max wondered inwardly what would be the next shifting scene; but he showed no surprise, and, indeed, felt none. They went out together into the garden, whither most of the company had already drifted; and there—he remembered too, in after days, the scent of the lime-trees they walked under—she asked him to teach her the violin.

'You know,' she said, 'in spite of that terrible Nightingale, I am not utterly unmusical. Even Mr. Sylvester would tell you that. He was my master once, you know, and is now my sternest censor. His aims in life are serious, and a lower ideal seems to jar upon him. His nature is—much too sensitive.'

She spoke with pensive satire, which Max ignored.

'I knew,' he said lightly, returning to the first part of her speech, 'that you were not utterly unmusical!'

'Did you really?' she said. 'I think you know everything.'

'That is another privilege of genius,' said Max, with a flash of gaiety, though in reality he felt anything but light-hearted.

'Evidently,' she replied. 'But you *will* teach me, will you not?'

'Gladly,' said Max, 'if you will practise!'

'I will practise,' she said simply. 'I used to practise singing quite irreproachably.'

'You must have done,' said Max.

'Oh, you are thinking of that unlucky song,' she exclaimed petulantly. 'I will never sing it again.'

Max laughed. By this time they had returned to the house, and Judith, who was ascending the flight of steps that led to the hall, paused, a step above him, while he looked up at her incredulously.

'Ah, you have no faith in me yet!' she exclaimed.

'Indeed I have,' said Max. Her face changed again.

'I verily believe you have,' she said half penitently. 'How I wish I could impose as easily on everyone!'

Max smiled. The twilight was gathering, and there was a touch of cold in the air. He seemed slighter and more boyish than ever, as he looked up at her.

'Perhaps you will not find it difficult,' he said quietly, 'if you try.'

An hour after this he was walking home through deserted streets with Sylvester. Something about him—his genius, or his fragility, or both—had won on the older man powerfully. Yet in spite of his fragility there was a curious strength about him; and Sylvester found himself regarding the lad with an odd reverence, as one whom he was less likely to teach than to learn from. Probably to no one else would he have spoken, on this homeward walk, of Judith, but he spoke to Max.

'How do you like Miss Desmond?' he said abruptly.

'Very much,' said Max. 'I am going to teach her the violin.'

Sylvester shrugged his shoulders.

'That is her latest whim,' he said. 'Let us hope she may repent of it. That woman is as fascinating as Cleopatra, but Cleopatra never was so relentless.'

Max shook his head.

'You are making a mistake,' he said confidently.

'Good gracious, man!' exclaimed Sylvester, all the more irritably because he wished in his heart that the other's words

might be true. 'I've known her for five years. I wish she had let you alone.'

'Why?' said Max. 'You are afraid for me. I am not afraid for myself. I wonder if Cleopatra ever learned music, and what her music master thought of her.'

'You don't know what you are talking about,' said Sylvester restlessly.

'Perhaps not,' returned Max. 'Nevertheless, I am not afraid. There is nothing to fear,' he added, with a sudden light in his eyes.

CHAPTER III.

MAX had a curious idea that he understood his two new friends, Miss Judith Desmond and Sylvester, better than they understood each other; and it was clear to him that he wished something might come of this. But another thing was clear, even on that first night.

'Already?' he said. He lay awake an hour, thinking it over, and then fell asleep, and slept pleasantly—too pleasantly, indeed, for he dreamed that he was happier than he had ever been before. Something had come of it, but not the thing he intended. But the dream haunted him, and when Sylvester dropped in, and they went for a stroll together, it persistently came between them, till Sylvester said:

'What's wrong, Davenant?'

Then he roused himself.

'Nothing,' he said. 'I had an evil dream, that is all, and it has been haunting me. But it was only a dream.'

'You're sure it won't come true?' said Sylvester.

'Quite sure.'

A few days after this Sylvester met Judith, as beautiful as ever, at a garden party, and she stopped him carelessly.

'Don't you wish to hear the last of your young friend?' she said amiably. 'He has just given me a lesson. I am delighted with him.'

'You do him,' said Sylvester, 'too much honour!'

'Oh no,' said Judith. 'Genius—one always bows down to genius. I feel like—Charles the Second, was it?—offering to pick up Titian's paint-brush, when I am with him. He believes in me implicitly—it is really touching. No, it couldn't be Charles the Second—what am I saying? Some Spanish monarch?'

Sylvester was silent.

'You would like to say something?' Judith continued, with the same sublime impertinence. 'What is it? That I am not worthy to black Mr. Davenant's boots?'

'That,' said Sylvester quite decidedly, 'goes without saying.'

'You would not always have thought so,' said Miss Desmond, with faint laughter in her voice.

'No,' said Sylvester imperturbably. 'You were a person whom it took some time to realise. It amuses you to try and shake people's faith in human nature; but you will not shake his.'

'Faith in human nature!' said Judith. 'What a curious anachronism!'

'It must strike you as odd,' he returned, with a careless contempt that was almost good-natured, and that hurt her far more than his bitterness. 'Good afternoon.'

He had left her alone, and soon she deserted the garden party and went home. Once he would not have left her so quickly. Once he would have said to her, 'That is not like you.' Now he believed her, and she deserved to be believed. It *was* like her, and he was right. It was and should be like her now.

She stood there before her mirror, quite alone in the room. 'I am beautiful,' she said to herself. 'A beautiful, heartless woman—now and for ever. He is right. I am very beautiful. He is right. He is right—I never loved anyone—I love him.'

She broke into passionate sobs.

Max gave her a violin lesson once a week, and she practised steadily, which was almost more than he had expected. The whole proceeding seemed to be a rest to her—a fact which he noted gladly, though it was no rest to him.

'She likes me indirectly,' he said to himself. 'She can be courteous to me when she cannot be courteous to him. It is a relief to her to like some one who is his friend.'

It was. It did not occur to her that perhaps she was hardly acting justly to Max Davenant. But her confidence in him grew steadily. Sometimes she came in her worst mood, which he only laughed at, and refused to credit, with a persistence that she could not conquer. Once—she had come after another of those slight skirmishes with Sylvester, bitter and reckless enough—she said, after two or three sneering and scornful speeches to which he paid no attention:

'Do I destroy your faith in human nature?'

'Not in the least,' said Max tranquilly. 'Why?'

'Because,' she replied, 'I never have a thought beyond my own selfish caprice.'

'Perhaps not "never,"' he suggested mildly. 'Not often.'

'Never!' said Judith emphatically.

'You should know best,' said Max calmly. 'Never, then. Still, you are only one person, and from your own account very exceptional.'

'And I exaggerate my own importance?' inquired Miss Judith.

'Why, yes,' said Max dubiously, 'I think you do.'

'Yet certain people have told me,' argued the young lady, 'that other lives like mine *would* shake their faith in human nature.'

'They must be unusually weak-minded people,' returned Max, with a gleam of humour in his eyes that Judith did not see. 'There are a great many lives like yours. Sometimes you seem to think you have a monopoly of selfishness. But selfishness is not rare. I think it is only a kind of background to what is fine after all.'

'I am part of the background,' said Judith. 'You are very flattering.'

'It is your verdict,' said Max quickly, 'not mine.'

There was a moment's silence, and then she broke out:

'You are a good man. I wish you believed in me. I wish some one believed in me!'

'I am not a good man,' said Max, quietly enough. He was not looking at her, and his face was hard and set; but she did not see his face. 'But I believe in you. I shall always believe in you. And I am "some one."'

'You are a great deal,' she said humbly. 'But how can you? There is nothing to believe in.'

Max reflected. There was really not much.

'That may be true,' he said. 'You are cynical, and hard, and revengeful. You care a great deal about wealth and rank. You are polite to people when it is not worth your while to be insulting to them; but you prefer to be insulting. You had rather say a stinging false thing than a pleasant true one—'

'What a charming character!' exclaimed Judith, now quite recovered. 'Pray go on!'

'I am going on,' said Max, not disconcerted. 'As I was saying, I believe in you. That, I grant, is not of much importance. You may sneer if you choose—that will not hurt me. I

am not weak enough to let it alter my mind. We are forgetting the lesson. Do you mind playing the last solo ?'

'Wait a moment,' she said. 'You think you are right ; but you will alter. Sometimes I can sound earnest, but that passes away. It is only another form of affectation, of interesting the world and attitudinising. Other people have believed in me ; but I wore their faith out at last. I have won love—for the pleasure of throwing it away. I showed them that all I said meant nothing, that I could say the same things to very different persons, that I could sneer at them too, behind their backs, just as I have often sneered at you, to people I despised. Every friend I have had knows now that I care for my diamonds more than I ever cared for them.'

'No,' exclaimed Max impetuously. 'They do not really believe it.'

'Do they not ?' said Judith haughtily. 'They do ; and it is the truth. It took me some time, but I destroyed their faith at last. With patience, one may destroy anything.'

Somewhat to her surprise, Max suddenly laughed outright.

'Why did you do it ?' he asked. 'You are like the children who pull up their seeds to see if they will grow.'

'That was it, I think,' said Judith. 'I did that when I was a little girl. I have been doing it ever since. And I have pulled them up,' she concluded, with a fierce triumph that nearly broke down ignominiously in a sob, 'every seed !'

CHAPTER IV.

MAX was writing an opera, and working hard. This it was, no doubt, that made him look haggard and wasted. Only Sylvester suspected that there was something beyond this, and that a name they seldom mentioned was nevertheless a bond between them. Sylvester had half expected Max to write an oratorio ; and it is possible that the reason he had not done so was simply that he was haunted by a person who worked into an opera a great deal better. And yet, as his friend said suddenly at one of the rehearsals, when the opera was finished and accepted, 'My dear fellow, you have written something between the two.' This was, vaguely, the impression of the audience also on the opening night.

Under these circumstances it was perhaps astonishing that the thing should be a complete success. It was. Sylvester

himself was first tenor; and his heart at least was rejoiced at the long thunder of applause when the curtain fell. Max found himself somehow dragged to the front of the stage, and bowing to the audience, with his friend's radiant face close by. And being there, the use he made of his commanding position was to look quietly round for Judith. For he only knew the true name of the heroine of the opera.

Involuntarily, Paul Sylvester's glance took the same direction. But for this, it is possible that his friend's eyes might not have encountered Judith's eyeglass, upheld by a hand quite blazing with diamonds, and her face illumined by an exquisite sneer.

It is hopeless to look chagrined or reproachful at an eyeglass, especially when the eyeglass is a purely unnecessary affront from a keen-sighted person. Max did not. A curious smile crossed his face, which Judith saw and understood—and remembered long after. Her eyeglass dropped; but it was too late. They had both turned away. Yet she had done what she meant to do—had defied Sylvester, with that look of generous triumph, and had changed it to one of scorn. That was worth while. His face was very noble, very indignant. Under the circumstances, she would go home—and flirt. She went home; there was a good deal of company in the house, which did not retire for another two hours—and flirted. In her wildest moods, she had never flirted so fast and furiously. Then she went to bed, with a headache, and a general impression that she had nearly engaged herself to two men, one a wealthy brewer's son, the other a viscount—the best judge of horses, perhaps, in the United Kingdom—that she could endure neither of them, that she should probably marry one of them, and that she wished she were dead.

The next day, towards evening, Sylvester looked in on Max. There was no answer to his knock, and he opened the door. Max was sitting at the table, with his head on his arm, and fast asleep, his face flushed, and hair tossed about his forehead. He looked absurdly boyish, and Sylvester, watching him with deep amusement, realised that he was famous. There was a book before him, at which his friend glanced. It was a volume of Shakespeare, and lying open at a scene in the 'Tempest.' On the page was a rough pencil mark, and a pencil was on the table beside it. It was unusual for Max to score his books; and Sylvester looked at the lines marked—just a fragment of a dialogue between Prospero and Ariel.

"How now, moody,
What is't thou canst demand?"
"My liberty."

'Why did he mark *that*?' Sylvester wondered restlessly; and as he was wondering Max woke; and sprang up and greeted his friend.

'How now, lion of the season?' said Sylvester good-naturedly. Then he added in a more serious tone:

'You look wretchedly ill, old fellow. Fame doesn't agree with you.'

'I've a furious headache,' said Max. 'I never felt less famous. I've just been conducting a concert in a badly ventilated place.'

'Oh, your wretched East-end musical societies!' said Sylvester impatiently. 'Philanthropy's all right, but you do too much. It's bad for you.'

Max laughed, a little harshly, his friend thought; but when he spoke it was in his usual tone.

'It is difficult to draw the line,' he said meditatively. 'I wonder sometimes if it isn't better to go straight on, as far as possible, to the end, if there is no one dependent on one. It is so easy to spend half a lifetime in taking precautions. Then the next page is always so fascinating—never this page, but the next. One must turn over.'

'You look,' said Sylvester, surveying him intently, 'as if you had been turning over too fast. Yet people call you a tranquil fellow.'

'That is partly because I'm always in a hurry,' said Max laughing. 'I hardly remember the moment when I wasn't waiting to turn over; and there was always some one reading with me who read too slowly, though maybe they understood it better.'

'Who's reading with you now?' said Sylvester rashly.

'It is not my book at all,' said Max with composure. 'It is Miss Desmond's. We have made two different guesses about the conclusion; and she will not turn over for fear I have guessed right. But I may be wrong after all. I want to see the end, and then I'll go back to my own volume. I know the end of *that*.'

'Is it a good ending?' inquired Sylvester.

'The best possible ending,' said Max tranquilly. 'But several volumes—I don't know why I am talking this nonsense. Really all I wanted,' he went on audaciously, 'was to get you to speak about Miss Desmond.'

'That is a very unprofitable topic,' said Sylvester coldly.

'Do you still believe in her?'

Max nodded.

'May I ask why?' said Sylvester.

'I often wonder why,' replied Max. 'All the same, if it were my last word, I should tell you to believe in her.'

'And I shouldn't do it,' said Sylvester. 'I loved her desperately enough once. Now that is all over.'

'I see,' returned Max.

'You are laughing at me,' said Sylvester, though his friend's face was quite sober. 'It is true, all the same.'

'She is very beautiful,' said Max. 'Don't you remember that first night, Sylvester, when she wore the rose-coloured silk, and talked unutterable scandal all dinner time, purely for the sake of vexing you, who were sitting opposite?'

Sylvester flushed.

'And the pocket-handkerchief with the lace fringe to it—and the Nightingale song? She was in a curious mood. I think in some of her moods it would be a relief to her to stab some one, though she would stab herself after. But she was very beautiful, confess it, Sylvester. You would go, if she called you. Why, even I would go if she called me, and I'—he looked up with a sudden bright laugh—'am not in love with her.'

'You are right,' said Sylvester. 'I would go if she called me. It is an idiotic habit one gets into. I think I should go, after twenty years. But she will not call me.'

CHAPTER V.

It was the Thursday after the first performance of Max's opera, and for the only time since she had been his pupil, he had not appeared to give Judith a violin lesson, nor sent a word of explanation. She waited an hour, hardly able to believe that he would not come. But by-and-by she thought she understood.

'Very well,' she said to herself sweetly. 'Now I can do as I like.'

The mirror gave its consoling reflection as she passed it. She had on a white dress, that she had donned for Max's benefit; and she was radiantly beautiful.

'Life is before me,' she murmured. 'Friends make one unhappy. They are a mistake. I will be happy now, till my beauty goes; for I have no friends left.'

She had been happy once, she reflected; at least it almost seemed so. Certainly, that was before she had known Sylvester. But since then she had known, and ceased to know him, and would be happy again. So with a curious sense of freedom, almost joy, she went downstairs.

There was a huge ball that night—huge, but very select all the same—one of the balls to which it was like a testimonial of merit to be invited. Judith did not expect to meet Sylvester there, it was a cut above him, and balls were not in Davenant's line, though his recently achieved success might have won him an invitation. Neither of them would be there, but she knew several people who would be. The brewer's son would not, and Judith, as she reflected on this fact, solemnly and once for all decided against him. The Viscount would.

If she married him! He was rich, much richer than she was. He was quite at the top rung, or at least the rung next to the top, of the social ladder. It was glorious to be right in the whirl of everything. Certainly she did not like him. He was not a man she could respect, much less reverence. But then——

'It would be most awkward for me,' she reflected, 'to marry a good man. And most awkward also,' with a compassionate thought of Paul Sylvester, 'for the good man.'

Again—this was when she was dressed for the ball, and was surveying herself once more—it seemed the most solid satisfaction life afforded—a resplendent vision in jewels and creamy silk in the pier-glass.

'When one marries one is expected to flirt. Every novel demands it: it is the *sine quâ non* of married life. Two uncongenial spirits—very well. I am quite sure Clifford and I are uncongenial spirits. I could imagine no soul *more* uncongenial. What a realm for future romances!'

Things looked promising for the Viscount; and three hours later, when Judith and he were sitting together in a recess of the conservatory, they looked still more promising. At least he had never loved anyone so much before. Somehow, she had carried him out of himself. There was something in her beauty, in her very recklessness, in the sadness of her dark eyes behind their mirth, that made him almost fancy he would die for her, whether she loved him or not. And he hardly thought she loved him, though he had taken her hand in his, and it was lying there cold and passive. Her face was colourless; her eyes were fixed on him with a look he did not understand, but that he knew was the look

of no happy and fortunate woman. Therefore one may give him credit for having acted, for once in his life, rather like a madman, and utterly without his customary caution. For he did not think she loved him, but he thought that she would marry him.

So probably it would have been if just then voices had not passed their recess. Judith did not know the voices, but she heard the words.

‘And so Davenant is dying?’

‘Not the young composer?’

‘Haven’t you heard?’ He was only taken ill on Tuesday with typhus. Terrible thing—such a brilliant career cut short—’ Judith rose up.

‘Some one is dying who believed in me,’ she said in a strange low voice. ‘I must go. Never speak to me like this again.’

Clifford bowed. For all his selfishness, for all his vanity, he had never loved her so well.

‘I will take you to your carriage,’ he said. ‘Can I do anything?’

‘Get me a hansom—anything,’ said Judith. They were walking by this time, through groups that parted to make way for them, with wondering looks at Judith’s white face and rapid steps. And in another moment Clifford, knowing himself no more to her than a stone under the horse’s feet, had watched her drive away.

Barely half an hour had passed, when Sylvester, looking up from the lonely vigil he was keeping, by the side of the friend to whom the liberty he desired had come at last, saw the door open, and a splendid figure enter, with diamonds and floating robes. Judith glided up to the bedside, and looked at the still face on the pillow. She knew, but would not know, that she had come too late. For a moment she stood there, and then turned silently away again. But Sylvester sprang up.

‘Judith,’ he cried, ‘don’t look like that. He believed in you to the end—he loved you. If I could bear it for you!’

‘You!’ she said drearily. ‘Have you forgiven me too? Pray that I may die then. If you are good enough to forgive me, God will hear you.’

‘I’ll pray for what you like, Judith,’ he said simply. ‘But for myself too. Max is gone, and now you are the only being left, and if you die I will go with you.’

MAY KENDALL.

Some Indian Wild Beasts.

I WILL not try to enumerate all the wild beasts in India. It was my fate or fortune to meet a considerable number of them, under various circumstances and conditions, and though it compels me to be guilty of much disagreeable egotism, perhaps it may be in my power to tell something new about them. Yet it is very possible for an Englishman to spend many years in India without ever seeing a live wild beast. It would be less safe to assert that he will not have heard the voice of one, for even in the most civilised towns, such as Calcutta or Bombay, the jackal makes night hideous in the streets, and many a newly arrived visitor has jumped hastily from his bed, believing that a horrid murder was being committed within a few yards of him. It was only a jackal howling under his window. The prowling beast had either found some prey, or having searched in vain for it, he was challenging his comrades to let him know how they had fared. The cry of the jackal is usually rendered into English in the following words: 'Dead Hindoo, where, where, where, where, where?' The answer being: 'Dead Hindoo, here, here, here, here, here!' the tones rising and falling rhythmically in their dismal strain. Almost anyone who has heard the jackal's cry can passably imitate it, and a wild jackal in India will stop to answer the sound if he cannot make out whence it comes. I was at the Zoological Gardens in the Regent's Park one day, with an Anglo-Indian friend, who stood near the jackal cage and imitated the familiar cry. The jackal listened attentively, and after awhile began to call in answer to the unsuspected visitor. The prairie wolf in an adjoining cage pricked up its ears, but apparently did not understand what the jackal said in his Indian vernacular.

On the first night of my arrival in Calcutta, I had been told by my kind host that the jackals in his garden would probably serenade me, and, although thus warned, their yelling alarmed

me not a little. But a native servant sleeping outside my room, in the verandah, jumped up and called out 'Shoo!' as a child might say to a goose, and all was at once quiet. The first wild jackal that I remember to have seen was at Barrackpore during a visit to Sir Henry Hardinge, who was then Governor-General of India. One of his personal staff had taken out two Scotch terriers to India, and he wished to try if they would kill a jackal; so a live-trap had been set, and it had caught a jackal, which was brought to the courtyard at the entrance of the Viceregal Mansion. Everyone turned out to see the combat, and after a ten minutes' struggle, in which the dogs were severely bitten, the jackal gave in and lay down *exanimis* with its eyes closed. The dogs were taken away, and most of the party went indoors, but some of us stayed outside to finish our cigars, whilst a *moordafraash*, or sweeper, was sent for to remove the jackal's corpse. Then, when all was still, the jackal slyly opened his eyes, looked around, and, jumping up, rushed into the mouth of a barrel-drain close by. There it defied all our efforts to drown it out with water, and the dogs did not care to face it again in the drain. Doubtless, when night came on, the jackal emerged and rejoined his family, and it may be that he lives to this day.

Although the jackal is small in body, it has very powerful jaws. It is the terror of all Indian nurseries, where the native servants seldom fail to frighten little English children about it. But the native servants know that the jackal is by no means a myth in their own village homes. From the statistics published annually by the Government of India, I learn that in one year 928 persons were killed by tigers, and in the same year more than 1,000 children were carried off by jackals. A jackal finds a child sleeping or playing unprotected near its mother's hut, and is off with it in a moment. The audacity of a jackal is almost incredible. I was sitting one evening with a friend on his lawn near a bed of rather high rose-bushes. His dog, a terrier puppy about six months old, suddenly ran barking among the rose-bushes. There was a stifed yelp and a sort of scuffle, and we knew that a jackal had carried off the puppy within fifteen yards from us. Though we instantly rushed to the rescue, with at least a dozen native servants to help us afterwards in searching the whole garden, nothing was ever seen or heard again of that puppy or jackal. Under the name of 'the Phyoo' the jackal is believed by the natives of India to pilot a tiger to his prey. Some people aver that the Phyoo is a distinct animal from the

jackal, but no one can say that he has seen or slain such a beast. Indeed, the whole story is rather mythical, and it seems probable that a jackal, when it utters the cry known as the Phyoo's cry, is not piloting the tiger, but it is raising a note of alarm at the approach of a tiger.

It may seem strange that so few Englishmen in India have ever seen a wild tiger. But they have little chance of seeing one. The tiger is a very scarce and shy animal; and though, according to a recent picture in the *Graphic*, he comes out occasionally to see the ladies at the Pachmuree Sanatorium, when they are taking an evening drive, they are exceptionally fortunate, or it may be unfortunate if they don't like it. It was nearly five years before I saw a live wild tiger, though during that period my efforts to see one had been very numerous in the Chittagong jungles. Fortunately for me, I never did see a live tiger at that period, for I was armed with only a light smooth-bore gun, and except by the greatest good luck, its bullets would neither have killed nor stopped an angry tiger. Nevertheless, I used to walk after sunset along the sandy bed of a small river, where the tracks of tigers were numerous. I have crept along the edge of the jungle on the little hills in the early morning, and have tracked the footsteps of five different tigers in the course of two or three hours, where they had retreated into the jungle after their midnight prowls outside. One morning, I was sneaking up a ravine to get a shot at some hornbills perched up on a tree, when on looking down, I saw the footprints of a tiger so fresh before me, that the water from the sand was just trickling into them. The tiger can have been only a few paces in front of me, but it was probably as much afraid of me as I was of it. I mention these facts, not to boast of my own foolhardiness, but as showing that the tiger is a shy beast, and will rarely seek an encounter with a man if it can manage to slink away unseen.

But the time was to come when I was to be more successful in seeing wild tigers. Being transferred to the Bhagulpore district, I made friends with the Barnes's of Colgong, who were experienced sportsmen, and they soon introduced me to tiger-shooting from the howdah, with a line of elephants. We went to the Rajmahal jungles at the end of March, when the hot winds were blowing, and much of the high grass and reeds had been burnt. Charles Barnes knew the ground well, and the first day we put up a couple of tigers that were living in one of the cool green patches of grass that were left near some water. My

first idea was that two ponies were cantering in front of the elephants, but I quickly corrected that mistake, and as my companions were good shots, both tigers were soon despatched. One day a great calamity befell us. We beat along the bed of a nullah or stream, with bushes on either side of it. I was on the right wing of the line, and after we had gone about 400 yards, several fine spotted deer came out in front of me. It did not occur to me that these animals, instead of looking at my elephant, were still gazing towards the nullah. Charles Barnes called to me to shoot the deer, as we wanted venison for the camp, and I fired away all the eight barrels of my battery at the deer. I could not say, with *Æneas*, *numerus cum navibus æquat*, but I had secured one fine stag. Just as I was rejoicing at this, a big tiger cantered out of the bushes, not thirty yards in front of me. It was the tiger that the deer had been watching when they ran out of the bushes. All my guns were empty. I tried to re-load, but breechloaders were not invented then, and long before I could get a barrel ready, the tiger was far out of shot. How disgusted we all were, and how we despised the beautiful spotted stag which lay dead. But better luck was in store for us. For we went off in pursuit of the big tiger, and though we never saw him again on that day, we came upon his wife and two nearly full-grown cubs, who were busy with the carcase of a cow that they had killed. As our elephants approached them, the three tigers came roaring at us, but they none of them made good their charge. Altogether we had a lucky day, although the loss of the big tiger rankled long in my heart. We killed nine full-grown tigers and the two large cubs in the course of twelve days' shooting, which was considered good sport; but of course we had some blank days, and the heat and the glare about mid-day were scorching.

From that time forth for a long series of years, it was my good fortune to be able to shoot many tigers in Eastern Bengal, sometimes single-handed, but preferably with one or more companions. I never came to grief, or had any native with me injured by a tiger, but there is always the chance of an accident when playing with edge-tools. I was almost invariably in company with experienced men and good shots. But some men are excitable, however experienced. One day, as we were starting after a notorious tiger, the wife of my companion implored me not to let her husband get off his elephant till the tiger was dead. I thought little of her words at the moment; but, by-and-by,

after rather a scrimmage, I had stopped the tiger with a shot through his back, that paralysed him so that he could not rise. As he lay glaring at me with his terrible big green eyes, I was horrified to see my companion running up to the tiger on foot, for he had jumped down from his elephant on seeing the tiger fall. Luckily I had a spare barrel, with which I put a bullet through the tiger's head at once, and his eyes ceased to glare.

It was my good luck with two friends to get twenty-three tigers in one expedition of three weeks on the Berhampooter churs, but we had to work very hard indeed for it. I merely mention this to justify myself in writing about the wild tiger. From the security of the howdah, I have seen him in almost every position, usually sneaking off, trying to hide himself, but sometimes charging and fighting for his life. The pictures of sporting incidents are often exaggerated, and so are the descriptions of them. The tiger is usually an unwilling combatant, and seldom fights except in despair. On more than one occasion, it seemed as if the tiger thought the elephants were only big cows, and that they could be easily frightened or killed. In Eastern Bengal a man-eating tiger is seldom found. But if a tiger has once, by chance or intention, killed a human being, he finds the human neck so fragile, and the human being so incapable of resistance, that he is less disposed to take the trouble to kill the deer or cattle, who in their death struggles may hurt him with their sharp horns and hoofs. Nor is a man-eating tiger always old and mangy, as some writers have said. The finest and cleanest tigress that I ever shot had been killing human beings for some little time before the news of her ravages reached me.

After many years of casual tiger-shooting in Eastern Bengal, I was transferred to Burdwan, where the Rajah had a very fine menagerie, with several tigers in it. The Rajah, who is long since dead, was a well-educated, intelligent, and most kind and charitable man, but it was his pleasure at times to have a live young pig put in the den of his pet tiger. The tiger killed its prey, always seizing it by the back of the neck, whilst the long fangs were fixed deeply in the lower part of the throat. Usually the victim's neck was broken, and death was instantaneous. If the neck of an animal is too large for the broad grip of the tiger's open jaws, as in the case of a large wild boar or a buffalo, the tiger prefers to leave it alone. Where leopards abound, the owner of a dog does well to protect his dog's neck with a strong

metal and spiked collar, to make the dog proof against the ordinary attack of a leopard.

The summit of my happiness was attained when I was appointed by Government to be President of the Honorary Committee who superintended the management of the Calcutta Zoological Gardens. We had an abundant supply of tigers, for the private owner of a tiger soon gets tired of it, and as there is no regular market for tigers, the owners gladly presented them to the Zoo, whilst their liberality was duly acknowledged on the tickets in front of the cages. As most people rise early in India, I used to drive to the Zoo nearly every morning in the week, and walk about with our scientific member, Dr. Anderson, and our other colleagues, to see the animals. The public never came till later in the day, so we had the beasts quietly to ourselves, and saw them to the best advantage. The native keepers treated them very kindly. Each tiger seemed to have a special character of its own. They would usually eat from our hands the green *Dhoop* grass, fresh with dew, which we gathered and gave them through the bars. One tiger was blind, and would let itself be handled and patted by us, as would also a beautiful tigress which had been brought up by hand, for it was a tiny cub when its mother was shot by me near Dacca. The others were more or less friendly, only it was safer to rub their backs with a stick than with the hand, for a tiger whips round very swiftly, and though it might mean no harm, it might give an ugly bite. We had two very fine man-eating tigers with which it was unsafe to play, though they would eat the fresh dewy grass greedily when put before them. They had killed many human beings before they had been caught alive in pitfalls, and they had not forgotten it. But the large male of this pair was a coward, and at the sight of a small tame elephant in front of his den, he would run into his inner compartment and hide himself. He had never seen an elephant in his native wilds, but he did not like the look of it. So I remember the case of a tiger in the Burdwan Menagerie, which could not endure the sight of a white man, but hid itself in its den; though it was perfectly indifferent as to the dark-skinned natives if they went to look at it. But, however familiar we became with our tigers in the early morning, when we were alone with them, we had to leave them to themselves when the public came to look at them. Some of the public seemed to think that it showed their spirit and courage to rattle at the bars of the cages with their sticks, or to poke up the tigers with their

umbrellas. Moreover, the public always crowded to see the animals at their feeding time, when of course they become excitable, so that it was not the right time for playing with them.

I will pass on from tigers to bears, of which there are many kinds in India. Those with which I was best acquainted were the small black plains-bears, which are common in any part of Bengal where there are rocks and caves to provide them with a home. The plains-bear is an ugly, awkward, black-haired fellow; but he is much quicker and more active than he looks. Whenever I heard of a man who was going out bear-shooting for the first time, I used to advise him to go and see one of the bears in our menagerie and learn a lesson. This bear, whenever a stranger came and rapped on the bars of his outer den, rushed out from his inner den like a flash of lightning, and bounced against the iron gratings as if he would have dashed through them. It is advisable to learn what a bear can do in this way, before you go and put fireworks into his cave, and stand outside on a little rock about four feet high to get a shot at him as he comes out. If he is at home, he will come out fast enough; and if he sees you, he will be on that rock beside you before you can say 'knife.' Many accidents have occurred to inexperienced men who fancied that the bear would quietly come out, and stand up on his hind legs, and give them an early shot at his white waistcoat. I would recommend a novice to get on a rock at least ten feet high, or to stand behind a rock, so that the bear cannot directly see him. A bear in a fury, with all its thick long hair on end, looks much bigger than was expected, and when he stands up on his hind legs he measures some six feet in height. Though not carnivorous, he has some big canine teeth, which make dangerous wounds, and with his long claws he has a bad habit of scalping a man if he can get a paw on his head. One bear at a time is an ugly customer for a man on foot; but perhaps, when you are expecting one bear to bolt from its cave, the fireworks that you have thrown in drive out two bears. I never much liked shooting bears on foot. It was too dangerous for my taste, for bullets were always flying about in wrong directions, and the bears seldom broke cover exactly where they were expected to come. Of course it is perfectly safe to shoot a bear from a howdah on an elephant; but it is also easy to miss a bear, for his brain is small and well protected, and his long thick hair makes it difficult to judge the most vulnerable part of his body.

I had a sort of childish weakness for the tame or performing bears which are led all about the country by the men who have tamed and taught them. My servants had a standing order to bring every performing bear that they heard of to my house. The small black bears were most common, but from time to time men from Cashmere came with the large Isabelline bears from that part of India, and they were all welcome. The greatest objection is that each poor bear has had every tooth in his head pulled out, and wears a muzzle, of which it is one object to prevent the spectator from noticing the absence of the bear's teeth. After a certain amount of preliminary 'talkee-talkee,' the performance or combat begins. The man has covered his naked back with a thick piece of cowhide, but the rest of his garb is little more than a pocket-handkerchief. He slaps his naked arms and chest with his hands, and challenges the bear to come on. Bruin, standing fully as tall as the man, waddles forward with his head comically on one side, and after a few feints and passes, the man is locked in the bear's embrace. The cowhide on the man's back protects him from the bear's long claws, but to those who see the contest for the first time the position seems very dangerous. The man struggles and twists about, and tries in vain to trip up the bear, and all the while he is talking loudly, abusing the bear and all its ancestors with most untranslatable bad language, whilst he gradually seems to become more and more exhausted. Just as the spectator begins to get really anxious for the man's safety, there is a sudden twist—probably a preconcerted signal to the bear—and the pair roll over on the ground, the man promptly rising victorious, and planting his foot on the bear's neck. Throughout the combat the bear usually wears a stolid look of indifference whilst the man is shouting and abusing it, but, accustomed as I was to watch the struggle, and knowing full well that it invariably ended well, there have been times when it seemed as if the man would really be hurt, and that some one ought to interpose. But I never saw or heard of an accident. If you pay a visit to the huts where the bears and the men usually put up on the outskirts of a town, you will find them living as amicably together as the Irishman and his pig; and if you arouse them in the cold weather in the early morning, it is difficult to distinguish man from bear as they begin to rise from their slumbers on the same bed of straw.

I had an intention of saying something about elephants, of which I thought that I knew a little. But I give it up. The perform-

ing elephants to be seen in England are so very different from the animals that I used to know that I should be at once convicted of error by any boy or girl, to say nothing of grown-up people, who have witnessed the wondrous performances of Lockhart's elephants, or the many trained animals that may be seen in the itinerant menageries. Of course people will believe what they have seen with their own eyes; and as they thus know that an elephant walks on two legs, or stands on its head, or plays a musical instrument, or rides a bicycle, just as its keeper prompts it, it would be of little use for me to say anything of the humdrum accomplishments of the Indian elephant and his mahout, with which the public used to be satisfied. In England I have seen a bear riding on a horse, and at Paris a short time ago a lion was exhibited similarly mounted. There may be countries where these animals divert themselves thus *secundum naturam*, but I can only apologise for my ignorance of it.

Of all Indian animals the wild boar is the best and bravest. I have seen a great deal of him, having for many years hunted him on horseback, or with a line of elephants to drive him out of the thick coverts, so that other men well mounted on fleet horses might pursue and slay him with their spears. I was but an indifferent performer with the hog-spear, and have no feats of prowess to recount, though I once took a first spear where about ten other men were eager for that honour; but it was a very small boar, and it was quite his own fault that he fell into my hands, for I was sitting smoking at the end of a covert just thinking of starting for home after a blank morning, when the animal rushed out, and in self-defence I was obliged to spear it. How angry some of the other men were at my luck, though they did not all know how unmerited it was.

Being disabled from riding by an accident, it subsequently became my pleasant function to manage the line of beating-elephants, with which, in Lower Bengal, we had to drive the wild boar from his lair, in high rushes and thick grass and thorny bushes, so as to make him break across the open plain and fly for his life to some other shelter. It was most interesting to watch the dodges and devices of a cunning old grey boar as I stood in my howdah and tried to get the elephants to drive him out at a point convenient for the riders. The boar usually had his own ideas as to the line that he would take if he were compelled to face the open; but before coming to that last resource he would try everything else. Perhaps it was not heroic conduct on his part,

but he would seek to induce the fat old sow, his wife, with her infant progeny, to go out and show themselves as a blind to the hunters. If there were any of his older sons in the jungle, he would roust them from their hiding-places, and try to drive them out, to become a vicarious sacrifice. He would lie down and hide himself in an incredibly small patch of grass, so that the elephants might pass him by unsuspectingly; or, if too carelessly pressed by a loose line, he would charge right at some loitering elephant's legs, and there are very few elephants that will not flinch and turn aside from a wild boar's charge. It needed much patience and watchfulness to contend with all the wiles of the clever animal. I usually carried a gun loaded with snipe-shot, and a charge fired into the grass or bushes just behind where the boar was moving generally startled him, and if a chance pellet hit him he thought it best to quit the covert and trust to his speed to reach some stronger shelter or swamp impenetrable to elephants and horses. If the riders kept well back so as not to turn the boar again into the covert, he would have about a hundred yards' start before the sound of their horses' hoofs and the cries of 'Tally ho' informed him of the coming danger. It takes a very fast horse to catch a full-grown boar in a gallop over the open plain, but every experienced rider knows that he must go as hard as he can if he means to spear the animal. I shall not try to repeat the oft-told tale of the mortal combat that ensues. Often-times I could see all the incidents of the chase from my howdah, for not unfrequently the boar when overtaken would jink and come round again to the jungle from which he had started. When men ride really well the boar seldom escapes, unless he has the luck to find some deepswamp through which the horses cannot follow him. A full-grown wild boar in Lower Bengal is about 30 inches high, but they are sometimes found as high as 36 inches, and there is a skeleton in the Indian Museum in Calcutta of a boar that was 40 inches at the shoulder. There is almost as much difference in the anatomy of a wild boar and a tame one as there is between a man-of-war and a merchant ship. In the size of the brain the wild boar has a marked superiority, and perhaps this accounts for his great courage, which makes him fearless of everything. One morning, looking out of a railway carriage, I saw a wild boar come charging down at the passing train, but he missed it, for the train was going too fast for him, and he was a little hampered in forcing his way through the wire railway fencing.

I had something to do with rhinoceros, but never succeeded in shooting one, though I sought for them for three long and hot days under the guidance of the best sportsman in Assam; and I visited their haunts in the Sunderbunds with men of great local experience. But the rhinoceros, like all big animals, has acute senses of smelling and hearing, and makes off at the slightest indication of danger. We had a large one in the Calcutta Zoo which was very tame, and when it got a bad abscess in the head, of which it eventually died, it used to come and lie down to have its ear syringed by the veterinary surgeon, whom it learnt to recognise. There were two fine rhinoceros in the Rajah's menagerie at Burdwan in the inclosure in which the crocodiles were kept, for the pond in which the crocodiles used to swim served also as a bathing-place for the rhinoceros. One day a young pig had been turned into the inclosure to become food for the crocodiles, and as these animals don't travel very fast on land, piggy led them a lively chase, and at last, perhaps by chance, it took refuge under the legs of one of the rhinoceros, which was looking on solemnly, but when the crocodiles approached the rhinoceros, the latter presented his horn and warned the crocodiles to be off. And so the pig survived and grew up and lived for some months under the protection of the rhinoceros. I saw it there, and sent an account of it to my cousin Frank Buckland. But in the course of time piggy became over-confident, and one day, as he was walking through some high grass near the pond, one of the crocodiles that was lying there in the sun swept him into the water with his powerful tail and plunged in after him, and no more was seen of poor piggy save that the waters were stained with his blood. When our large rhinoceros in the Calcutta Zoo died, I wrote to every native prince and potentate of my acquaintance to beg for a new specimen, but they had none to spare. At last I wrote to an old friend, a native magistrate, named Tyjunal Ali, as follows: 'My dear Sir,—When I was a magistrate and you were a policeman, if I ordered you to catch a thief, you caught him. Now you are a magistrate in the Sunderbunds I want you to catch a rhinoceros for the Zoo, and am sure you will not fail.' My friend replied, urging the difficulties of the case, but promising to do his best. Several months passed, when one day a man appeared with a letter to me. 'Honoured Sir,—Herewith I send you a rhinoceros, which my shikaris have caught after much labour. They shot the mother and then secured the young one. Please forgive me for sending

such a small one, but it will soon get bigger.—I am your obedient servant, Tyjumul Ali.' It was a dear little beast, and quite gentle, so that a man could ride on it. It grew very fast, but it got fever when its large teeth began to come, and so it died. We lost several young elephants in the same way from fever when teething.

Crocodiles, or, as they are more commonly called, alligators, were very common in Eastern Bengal. I could not venture to guess how many hundreds I must have seen in many voyages through the Sunderbunds, and in navigating the large rivers and backwaters of the Dacca division. In Calcutta children sometimes keep little crocodiles as pets, but they seldom live long. I have fired many shots at them, but I cannot pretend to have killed many—at least, outright. The crocodile is very tenacious of life. Once when staying at an indigo factory on the Ganges, we were greeted on our return from a long morning's shooting by the news that some fishermen had caught a live crocodile in their nets, and had brought it upon a bullock-cart to the factory. A strong rope was tied round its loins, and it was put into the factory tank or reservoir while we dressed and breakfasted. After about an hour we had the creature pulled out of the tank and tried to kill it. A few bullets seemed to make little impression; a spear thrust down its throat was of no avail. At last its head was chopped off with a Sontal axe, and the body was cut open and the vital organs taken out. The muscular action still continued to move the tail when the beast was headless and its heart was lying on the ground by its side. This crocodile was about six feet long, and a large fish was found in its stomach. In the Rajah's menagerie at Burdwan there were several very large crocodiles, as has been already mentioned. They were kept in a reservoir full of dirty water covered with green scum. It was the Rajah's custom to give these creatures a live duck occasionally. When a poor duck was thrown into the pond, the head and eyes of a large crocodile might be visible just above the water. When the duck had recovered from the fall, and had settled and plumed its feathers, it would usually paddle away a few feet from the spot where it had alighted. Meanwhile the crocodile's head and eyes had disappeared from their original position, but only to reappear suddenly on the exact spot where the duck had first alighted. It was marvellous with what exactness the crocodile had marked and measured the distance that it had to dive through the thick, muddy water. Of course, as soon as the duck saw its enemy it

fled, splashing and fluttering, to the other side of the tank. But it was only an escape from Scylla to Charybdis; for there were several crocodiles in the tank, and the poor duck had rushed blindly into the jaws of another monster. The huge jaws opened and closed, and the duck was seen no more. In the Calcutta Zoo we sometimes kept a crocodile in a cage for the public to see at their leisure. Unfortunately, we had more crocodiles than we wanted, for volunteer crocodiles from the river Hooghly and its tributaries found their way over our fences and walls into the ornamental waters, where they killed several of our black swans and English swans, and other valuable birds, before we found them out or could provide a safe refuge at night for our pets. The water was drained off from the lakes, and several sportsmen attended in the hope of getting some crocodile-shooting; but the crafty animals had buried themselves in the mud, and were strictly invisible.

Let me turn to the more innocuous tribe of monkeys, which are usually favourites with young people. I regret to say that one of my earliest mentors in sport taught me to shoot wild monkeys for the sake of their skins, from which we made comfortable soft racquet-shoes. But I soon abandoned the evil practice; and in after-times did what I could to make up to the monkeys for this unkindness. I flatter myself that I once saved the life of a large ourang-outang in the Calcutta Zoo. He was a big ugly fellow, all covered with red hair. He had got out of his house and was walking about the gardens, when he was seen by some casual workmen, who were much frightened, and began to throw bricks at him, and strike at him with big sticks, and probably they would have hunted him to death. Luckily, I appeared on the scene, and ordering the crowd to stand back, I went forward and offered the ourang-outang my hand. He immediately took hold of my wrist, and we walked off together to his house, rather a comical-looking pair I fancy, and he gladly took refuge indoors. He was really very tame, and would always eat grain out of the palm of my hand, holding my wrist tightly with his hand till the grain was finished. Some of the ourang-outangs that we had were so tame that they used to be let out loose in the gardens until the hour when the public began to arrive. But they did much mischief to our trees. For it was their pleasure to get up the trunk of a tree and break off some of the branches, and make for themselves a platform to sit upon, about 20 feet from the ground. If they had been content with one tree, it

would not have signified so much; but when the leaves of the shady bower that they had built began to wither away and give insufficient protection from the sun, they commenced to build a new house and to ruin another tree. They were very sensitive of the heat of the sun. My particular friend mentioned above had the misfortune to lose his wife, a lady of much darker colour and rather larger than himself and, if it is not too rude to say so, even much uglier. But he was very fond of her, and of their baby, which was a few months old, and quite pretty in comparison with its parents. But the poor lady died, and her husband was inconsolable. He planted himself out in the heat of the midday sun, until he got a *coup de soleil*, followed by paralysis, and he also died. We had specimens in the Zoo of nearly every kind of monkey in India, but I have no space to tell of them in detail. Most monkeys are gregarious in their habits, and like to live together in a troop. If kept singly they droop in spirits and neglect their toilets, 'whereas,' writes Dr. Anderson, 'if two or more are kept together they mutually attend to personal cleanliness in the way which is so characteristic of their race.'

I have also learnt from Dr. Anderson, that no monkey of the Old World uses its tail as an organ for prehension—whereas in the monkeys of the New World, the tail is as much used as a fifth hand. But if the Old World monkeys have not got prehensile tails, there is one quaint animal in India that makes up for this shortcoming. This is the Binturang, the creature that I loved most of all the beasts in the Zoo. It is about the size of an English fox, with pointed nose, tufted ears, and a long shaggy pepper-and-salt-coloured coat, with a very thick tapering, prehensile tail. All the specimens that we had were very tame and tractable, and would do almost anything if bribed with a plantain or banana. One rather large one delighted to come out and play with us and climb up our legs, and then lower itself from an outstretched arm by its tail. One day the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal came to see the animals, and we took him to look at the Binturang. The playful creature at once fraternised with him, as if he had been an ordinary man and not a Lieutenant-Governor. It climbed up his leg on to his shoulder, and then gracefully hung from his neck, round which it had curled its tail. The tableau was lovely; and it might have gladdened the heart of Mr. Harry Furniss to see it, but the Lieutenant-Governor did not quite like it.

At the Sign of the Ship.

IN the spring many persons fling 'the winter garment of repentance' away, and betake themselves to backing horses. It is their business, of course, to know how much they like to give for the pleasures of hope; but the pleasures of hope are all they purchase by betting. I have been young, and now am old; but I never knew man, woman, or child who increased their store by wagering on horse races. In no form of gamble are the odds so far from being what they should be. When we consider what horses are, what owners, trainers, jockeys, and the hangers-on of the turf are, it is extraordinary that persons who might speculate on the Stock Exchange, or might cut through the pack for sovereigns, or might play baccarat or roulette, or might purchase land, or publish their novels at their own expense, or endow an Institute for readers of *Robert Elsmere*, or might stand for Parliament as Liberal Unionists, should find no better way than backing horses, when anxious to be parted from their money. I believe it is not avarice, as the Clergy say, that makes people select these peculiarly unremunerative investments—not avarice, but vanity. They wish to demonstrate their knowledge of human nature and horseflesh, by winning in so difficult a game. Or they are anxious to back their Luck, because it is their own luck, and we all have a high opinion of the luck that is our own. It is either better or worse than our neighbours', we wager to prove that it is the former, and end by demonstrating, when we have had losses, that it is the latter.

* * *

Not a bad way is to back our Dreams. I do not mean all our Dreams; it would never do to maintain that they will be fulfilled on every side. For example, I dreamed last night that I was on a pedestrian tour to Scotland. On the way I met a young and amiable lady of my acquaintance, disguised as a Highlander,

in bonnet and kilt. There is hardly one chance in three million that this vision will be fulfilled, still less that we shall be entertained at luncheon in a clergyman's family, where the meal is provided by stoning hippopotamuses to death in the avenue. This was all part of the same clear and coherent revelation. But sporting dreams are a different affair. They are fulfilled, just as often as any less mystic method of finding winners proves satisfactory.

* * *

To the Psychical Society I recommend the following revelations, from the lips of a very old friend. Be it noticed that he does not often dream of winners and of handicaps; he has only done so twice, he says, and both times right. My friend, whom I shall call Daniel, dreamed then that he was at Epsom, and saw from the hill the horses passing in a great race. He knew, by inspiration or some other gift, that the race was not the Derby. 'It must be the City and Suburban,' he thought, and he beheld Archer win, in the colours of the Duke of Westminster. Next day he consulted the sporting scriptures, learned that the Duke of Westminster had Bend Or in the race, and that Archer was to ride; backed the animal, and reaped the golden rewards of the Seer. The other vision of the night showed him the *Evening Standard*, that admirable print, and, in large letters, the names of

THEBAIS

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and of two other horses, but the two other names he could not read. Next day he sought the counsel of the wise, learned that Thebais was engaged in a race, I forget which, backed the beast, and won. Is not this '*something like prophetic strain?*'

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?

asks Beddoes.

If there were dreams to sell,
A certain tip that tell
When the crier rang the bell,
Those would I buy.

* * *

As a contrast to those golden visions I am moved to offer the melancholy story of another friend, Mr. Juggins, as a warning to

adventurous youth. Mr. Juggins knew no more of racing than I do of the Ostiak language; but he went to Newmarket to see a great race. Among the horses one much took his fancy; he liked the look of that horse and its way of moving—let us call it Pinturicchio. To his surprise Pinturicchio was at the unflattering price of twenty to one. At those odds Mr. Juggins entrusted it with a five-pound note, then an object very rare in his collection. Pinturicchio ran, Pinturicchio won. Everybody but Mr. Juggins knew that he could win, but everybody knew that he was not intended to win. Accident, or the inattention or dishonesty of his jockey, permitted Pinturicchio to run as fast as he chose, whereas a very different manœuvre indeed had been contemplated by his stable. Who, then, so gay as Mr. Juggins? Not knowledge of stable secrets, but an eye for a horse, he declared, was the secret of success on the turf. But, alas! Mr. Juggins had wagered his money with a flagrant welsher, and not one penny of his 100% was he ever paid. This is an extremely moral tale, and illustrates the lesson I would fain enforce, namely, not to back horses—except, of course, on the authority of Dreams. Even then, is it fair? Is it not backing a certainty? The curious can try; perhaps every dreamer has not the same vision.

* * *

At Loch Awe, lately, I discovered that the Highlander is still rich in legends of every sort. One supposed that they had all been forgotten, superseded by Radical leading articles, and other inventions, as veracious, but not as entertaining, as the stories of vampires and the Second Sight. Some of my boatman's tales have been published elsewhere. One was a popular and traditional form of the legend in Scott's poem of *Glen Finlas*. Even more curious, readers of Mr. Stevenson's *Kidnapped* will think, was the discovery that the Appin murder (of which Alan Breck was accused) is vividly remembered in tradition. The people think it a great shame that the wrong man was hanged. Thousands of them knew who the murderer was. How Celtic is this behaviour! You know who the murderer is, you let an innocent man swing for it, and then you find fault with the Law, because the wrong person was hanged! Of course the people to blame are the very people who, when they could have prevented the mistake, looked on and said nothing. The determination to eat your cake and have it, or know why, is very strong in an imaginative and interesting rather than a logical people.

* * *

The eager persons who bother men of letters to tell them 'How it is Done' (as if any one could tell) have lately been offered a little volume of confessions by authors. They are not all very eminent authors, and their gossip about themselves is of no value. But he who would see a good example of the attitude towards literature of a true student should read M. Anatole France's *La Vie Littéraire*. This is one of the good books which are as precious as good actions; such a wise, kindly, melancholy spirit of humour, and good humour, informs the various essays. M. Anatole France has discovered an unknown modern French poet—really a good poet in his degree. He says about M. Zola the things that should be said, and are seldom said. He brings to the criticism of modern literature what so few men bring, a wide and curious, and, so to say, affectionate knowledge of the world's classics. All that we can say against his essays is that they are too short. It is a rare fault. For the rest, the criticisms justify M. Anatole France's theory of criticism, namely, that it should be the history of a mind in contact with masterpieces. The true lover of books will find, in this author, a friend, and a companion who is never tedious, never flippant, always kindly, gentle, and witty. Infinitely more about the nature of letters can be learned from such a pair of volumes than from all the confessions of all the third-rate lady novelists.

THE FATAL ADVERTISEMENTS.

From all the sphere of Mars they pressed,

The wonder to inspect—

A telescope, the mightiest

A planet could erect.

And the two chief astronomers

Controlled the huge machine,

And first of all the universe

They sought our orb terrene.

Possessed of water, warmth, and air,

Our planet they could show ;

But who enjoyed these blessings there

Was what they wished to know.

And had the sphere whereon they gazed

Returned a glance or thought ?

What mighty problems had it raised,

And what solutions brought ?

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

The elder first our orb discerned,
And gazed ; and by his mien,
When mute with ecstasy he turned,
They knew that he had seen.

‘ It speaks, it speaks ! ’ he cried at last,
‘ That highly favoured sphere !
But is,’ he said, ‘ the problem vast,
Or the solution, here ? ’

Then in exultant, anxious awe,
While all the throng were dumb,
He traced the characters he saw,
The sign ‘ Linoleum.’

Tears rose in eyes unused to weep,
The portent as they scanned.
All felt some meaning dread and deep,
But did not understand.

They said : ‘ Strange undulations roll
Of cosmic woe and bliss.
New darkness dawns upon the soul
From gloomy galaxies.’

Then, altering the field of view
A trifle ere he gazed,
The next astronomer looked through,
And started back amazed.

‘ A new solution I discern,’
He cried. ‘ The old must go.’
Slowly he copied in his turn
The sign ‘ Sapolio.’

No further they could contemplate ;
A meteor—alas,
That it arrived a little late !—
Shattered the mighty glass.

But trouble gathered in the stars,
Confusion, doubt, and dread,
And from the tranquil realm of Mars
Tranquillity had fled.

And some professed to know, and some
Professed they did not know;
And some maintained Linoleum,
And some Sapolio.

But ere the whole discussion passed,
Each zealous faction wrote
Its watchword, graved in letters vast,
For other orbs to note.

And future spheres will sure behold,
When pondering on the stars,
Two signs imprinted on the cold,
Dejected sphere of Mars.

The strife of cycles long ago
Will be no longer dumb.
Some will maintain Sapolio,
And some Linoleum.

MAY KENDALL.

* * *

What is this that some one says in Mr. Labouchere's paper, calling Golf the game of Fogeys? The virtuous censor complains that men wear gloves at golf. So they do at cricket, when they keep wicket or bat; so one of the fielders does at baseball; so do fencers and boxers. At golf everybody does not wear gloves, but most for the sake of the grip, and to avoid blisters, are gloved on the left hand. To hit a small and most reluctant ball over two hundred yards is no work for a fogey. If caddies are employed, it is possible, as Sandwich knows and shows, to do without them on Sundays. Fogeys can fozzle, but they cannot play golf; and why should they not fozzle? It gives them air, and, if Mr. Labouchere's critic will try, he will find that there is exercise also in three rounds of five miles or so. When he is playing his twentieth stroke in 'the Maiden,' at Sandwich, he will learn whether or not golf is a languid lotus-eating game. If he prefers to walk to Wimbledon before beginning his game, let him; but he will not play the steadier for this preliminary fatigue. Golf is a game for all ages, according to their degree. A St. Andrews hero won the medal, after rowing stroke in the lifeboat, and rescuing a shipwrecked crew. Was this the act of a fogey? The young

men are the best players, just as much as at cricket, but the old can still potter along. It is a game

For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in,

thus differing from football, but not necessarily becoming fageyish. This defence is due to golf even from one who cannot play at it, who fozzles, tops, slices, draws, hooks, and misses the globe, accompanying it all with remarks 'of little meaning, though the words are strong.' Golf is a noble sport; but, as the other enthusiast said, 'I wish a game could be invented which one could enjoy playing at.'

A. LANG.

The 'Donna.'

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following amounts. Contributions should be sent to

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